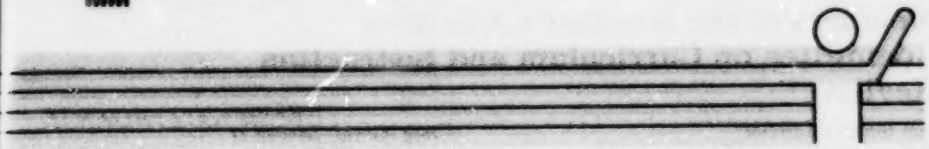
Curriculum & Instruction Review

Saskatchewan Education

Its Programs and Policies

85-1176/



Saskatchewan Education

Its Programs and Policies

Minister's Advisory Committee
Curriculum and Instruction Review
June 1984

Acknowledgements

Members of the Minister's Advisory Committee on Curriculum and Instruction Review

Jim Burnett, Director
Regina School Division No. 4

Pat Dickson, Assistant Superintendent
Saskatoon School Division No. 13

Richard Groshong, Secretary
Torquay Board of Trustees

Phil Hammel, Chairman
St. Paul's R.C.S.S.D. No. 20

Dave Hawley, Director
Kindersley School Division No. 34

Dub Henderson, Regional Director
Saskatchewan Education

Naomi Hersom, Dean
College of Education
University of Saskatchewan

Susan Holmberg, Parent
Yorkton

Willard Kallio
Former School Board Chairman,
Dinsmore

Mary Jane Kazyon
Dene Materials Developer
Stony Rapids

Barbara Keirnes-Young, Director
Saskatchewan Education

Glen King, Teacher
Nipawin School Division No. 61

Terry McKague, Executive Assistant
Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation,
Review Co-ordinator

Craig Melvin, Director of
Education and Research
Saskatchewan School Trustees Association

June Mitchell, Special Education Consultant
Regina School Division No. 4

Mavis Olesen, Teacher
Regina School Division No. 4

Donna Palmer, Regional
Co-ordinator-Curriculum
Saskatchewan Education

George Richert, Professor
Faculty of Education
University of Regina

Beryl Robinson, Teacher
Kindersley School Division No. 34

Karen Rongve, Principal
St. Paul's R.C.S.S.D. No. 20
Review Chairperson

Phil Schalm, Executive Director
Saskatchewan Education

Harold Schultz, Executive Assistant
Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation

Peter Tarnowsky, Principal
North Battleford School Division No. 103

Walter Wenaas, Principal
Estevan School Division No. 95

The Minister's Advisory Committee wishes to recognize and sincerely thank Ann Kilcher and Dianne Warren for their assistance in writing and editing this report. The Committee expresses its appreciation to Ann Seifert for her typing and clerical support.

Table of Contents

	Page
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	2
SUMMARY OF CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION REVIEW REPORTS	4
INTRODUCTION	5
CHAPTER ONE: POLICY	7
Goals of Education	8
Kindergarten to Grade 12 Program Policy	15
Curriculum Development Processes	27
Evaluation	36
CHAPTER TWO: PROGRAMS	39
Learning Resource Centre Services	39
Support Services	46
School Environment	49
Instruction	52
Inservice Education	55
Leadership	61
A LOOK TO THE FUTURE	65

Saskatchewan Education and Department of Education are synonymous terms and are used interchangeably in this report.

Summary of Curriculum and Instruction Review Reports

The Minister's Advisory Committee on Curriculum and Instruction collected a large amount of information on educational issues. In addition to its final report, **Directions**, the Committee prepared five booklets which contain background information. These are described briefly below.

DIRECTIONS: The Curriculum and Instruction Review was initiated as a means of assessing educational needs in Saskatchewan and proposing improvements to the education system. **Directions**, the final report, presents the major concerns, the Committee's response to those concerns, and the Committee's recommendations for educational improvement.

WHAT THEY SAID: The Curriculum and Instruction Review sought public opinion on education by distributing a questionnaire, holding public meetings around the province, and asking for the submission of briefs. **What They Said** presents the educational views of those people who responded to the Committee's requests.

SASKATCHEWAN EDUCATION: The Curriculum and Instruction Review proposed a number of changes that will affect the Department of Education. **Saskatchewan Education** outlines those changes and examines the role and responsibility of the Department in implementing the recommendations of the Review.

SASKATCHEWAN CHILDREN: The success of an education system is largely dependent upon its ability to respond to the needs of its students. **Saskatchewan Children** explores the unique characteristics of children in this province and the services that are available to meet their needs.

TOWARD THE YEAR 2000: Technological and social changes of the future will undoubtedly affect life on this planet. **Toward the Year 2000** examines the predictions of futurists as to how education should change in order to better prepare students for the future.

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT: A school's environment has a profound effect on both the productivity and satisfaction of its students. **School Improvement** examines the effect of school environment on learning, and explores ways of building more effective learning environments in Saskatchewan schools.

Introduction

The Curriculum and Instruction Review was designed to assess education in Saskatchewan and recommend changes for educational improvement. In "Directions", its final report, the Committee stressed the importance of collaborative planning and recognized that responsibility for education is shared by parents, students, educators, and the educational organizations in the province. The Committee made special mention of the Department of Education by recommending that it assume a leadership role in implementing educational change.

Committee members agreed that a primary purpose of the Department is to enable each school division to deliver quality education and meet local needs through local decision-making. They felt, however, that for change to be effective, a central body must assume responsibility for guiding the planning and implementation.

Education in the province is a shared responsibility, but there are specific aspects of education which are the responsibility of Saskatchewan Education. These functions fall into three categories: the Department provides educational direction to schools, it fulfills a regulatory function, and the Department provides support to assist schools in doing their jobs. Saskatchewan Education is responsible for policy development, curriculum development, maintenance of educational standards, identification of gaps in the system, and ensuring equality of educational opportunity. In addition, the Department provides support and technical assistance through a number of programs and research projects.

In "Directions", the Committee did not call for radical changes to the education system, but instead stated that excellence could be best achieved by building upon the past and upon what was found to be good about the present system. In the same way, Committee members did not call for radical changes in the functioning of the Department of Education. Their recommendations, however, have implications for the Department. They hoped that, through their recommendations, the functioning of Saskatchewan Education would adapt and grow along with the education system. The Committee looked to the Department of Education to provide more active leadership and give more direction to schools in the province for continuous growth and development.

The Committee presented its broad plan for educational improvement in "Directions". It was felt there was a need to examine in some depth just what the Curriculum and Instruction Review would mean for the Department of Education. "Saskatchewan Education: Its Programs and Policies" looks at a number of policy issues which provide direction or serve to regulate school operation. It then looks at certain programs or supports which were dealt with by the Committee.

It must be kept in mind that the Committee chose to make broad recommendations and felt that it would be premature to develop a detailed implementation plan at that time. The Committee was concerned that developing such a plan would eliminate the possibility of involving the educational community and impede the implementation process. What follows is an examination of current practice within the context of the Committee's framework for educational change.

CHAPTER ONE: Policy

Policy is a set of guidelines designed to influence future decisions. These guidelines are based on a system of values and an assessment of situational factors.

Policy is used by the Department of Education to set out directions for Saskatchewan schools. Through policy, parameters are defined for decision-making related to educational goals, curriculum content, delivery of services, funding of programs, and assessment of outcomes.

Policy is important for three reasons. First, by establishing that all those involved with education should be involved in planning and decision-making, policy can foster an atmosphere of co-operation. Second, policy can serve to constrain arbitrary acts within an organization. Third, policy can facilitate the decentralization of authority and allow individuals to exercise judgements about problems they may encounter.

Policy Formation

Broadly defined, policy includes all written documents, statements of philosophy, customary practices of the Department of Education, and all statutes and regulations regarding administrative procedures followed by Department officials. Those policies reflected in statutes and regulations have legal implications. Others are largely intended to guide education officials in carrying out duties derived from statutes or regulations.

The Deputy Minister exercises substantial control over policy review and development. Although any program manager within the Department may initiate the process, the Deputy Minister decides whether or not to proceed.

The Policy, Planning and Special Projects Division of the Department of Education is responsible for maintaining policy and co-ordinating revision and development of policy statements. This division provides expertise and technical knowledge upon request to Department officials who are reviewing or developing policy in specific areas.

Consultation is a major feature of policy development exercised by Department officials. Involvement of teachers, school trustees, and others affected by policy has been encouraged.

Department of Education policy is not clear to many educators and parents at this time. Formal policy found in legislation and statutes is difficult to read. Less formal policy is not consolidated and is not widely understood or easily communicated. Advice offered to schools by the Department of Education is often mistakenly perceived as being policy.

The Curriculum and Instruction Review Committee saw the need for clarification of educational policy. Policy affecting schools needs to be clearly set out, as do administrative guidelines and procedures of the Department of Education.

Besides recommending that policy be clarified, the Committee recommended that new policy be written in four specific areas. The Committee provided guidelines for a provincial statement of educational goals, a new kindergarten to grade 12 program policy, a new curriculum development process, and a review of evaluation procedures.

Goals of Education

During the Curriculum and Instruction Review, the need for an updated statement of educational goals became evident. While opinions on the possible uses for such a goal statement varied, there was agreement that clarification was needed regarding the role of the school and purposes to be served by the education system.

It has been 20 years since a comprehensive statement of educational goals was prepared for Saskatchewan. During that time a number of changes have taken place with respect to the nature of students, the requirements of society, and the functions which schools have assumed.

GOALS FORMATION

The Curriculum and Instruction Review Committee took a number of steps in the formation of its new statement of educational goals. These included an examination of a variety of sources and collection of a pool of possible goal statements, a workshop to establish guidelines, a goals writing session, Committee review, and subsequent revision.

The goals study began with an examination of the work of the Curriculum and Instruction Review including sub-projects, background papers, public responses, and the deliberations of the Committee. A number of other sources were consulted: goal statements from other provinces, goal statements from previous Saskatchewan studies and reports, and educational foundations literature. This review resulted in a bank of 169 goal statements and a variety of formats for consideration by the committee.

Committee members participated in a two-day workshop. They considered the bank of goals and brainstormed additional goals that would provide direction for schools in meeting the needs and challenges of the future.

Committee members worked in three small groups, each approaching the task from a different perspective. One group explored assumptions underlying our present system of schooling from the points of view of parents, teachers, students, and the

community. A second group suggested goal statements based on how schools prepare students for the future in a changing physical and social environment. The third group took four commonly used goal categories — vocational, social/cultural, academic, and personal — and wrote accompanying statements in behavioral terms.

The brainstorming results from the small groups were combined by the Committee to establish the following set of guidelines for the development of provincial goals of education:

- goals should serve to reduce the gap between what people expect and what schools can do
- a statement of philosophy should preface the goals statement
- reasoning and problem-solving should be seen as basic skills
- practicality and usefulness should be considered when developing a goals statement
- the goal statements should be personalized to reflect students' needs
- the goals should reflect commonly held values of this democratic society
- the goals should reflect support for the values, religions, and cultures that exist in this pluralistic society
- occupational goals should be kept to global, enabling life-skills statements rather than specific, job-related statements.

A sub-committee took the ideas and guidelines into a two-day goals writing session. A first draft of the goals was then taken back to the Curriculum and Instruction Review Committee for its review. The Committee considered several revisions and held discussions on the goals of education on a number of occasions. The new statement of educational goals resulted from this multi-step process.

COMMITTEE CONSIDERATIONS

In deliberations surrounding the goal statements, the Committee discussed and debated a variety of issues. Among them were the history of educational goals, the tone of the goals, priorities, value statements, societal changes, and the needs of future high school graduates.

Historical Perspective

An analysis of documents revealed that three previous statements of educational goals have been recommended during this century. Direction for schools was provided in the form of goals during 1918 in *A Survey of Education in the Province of Saskatchewan*, in 1956 as a result of the *Royal Commission on Agriculture and Rural Life*, and with the 1963 policy *A Plan for the Reorganization of Saskatchewan Schools*.

Many of the expectations for education in Saskatchewan have not changed over the years. The value placed upon equality of opportunity in 1918 and again in 1963 remains unchanged in Saskatchewan's philosophy of education today. Some issues have concerned educators and the public for decades: a commitment to literacy, regard for individual learners, school-community relations, and the need for learning resources. Goals statements have consistently reflected concern for these issues over the years.

The most recent consolidated statement of goals is found in the 1963 program policy document on the Division System. These goals are comprehensive in nature and organized by broad developmental areas: academic, cultural, vocational and occupational, social, moral and spiritual, and health and physical development. They focus on what the teacher and school will do to promote learning. While the shared responsibility for education was acknowledged in this previous statement of goals, it is clear that the school's primary function was to foster the intellectual development of children and youth.

Tone of the Goals

Former goals were written in such a way as to describe what the school should do. The Committee chose to present the new goals using a more personal tone. As a result, the emphasis of the new statement of goals is on the individual and describes what an educated person should be like. The Committee outlined specific behaviors and skills the system of education should strive to develop in students. It was felt that this approach to the goals, with the focus on the student, would provide clear direction for education no matter what level of education was being considered.

Priorities

The role of the school in contributing to the development of an educated person was basic to the discussions on goals. The Committee felt that the school cannot restrict itself to teaching academics but must provide for the total development of the individual. This signals a shift in emphasis from previous goals statements.

The Committee chose not to prioritize the goals. While it acknowledged that the school cannot address all of the goals to the same extent, it was felt that all categories must be addressed within the school program through curriculum, instruction, or school environment.

Shared Responsibility

The Committee stressed that achieving the goals of education must be jointly undertaken by all those people and organizations involved with children. These include school, home, church, and community. The Committee believed that the role of each would vary from school division to school division, as would the amount of involvement.

Value Statements

Early in the discussions it became apparent that value-free goal statements were impossible to write. There was agreement that a set of generally accepted moral standards or values exist. Terms like honesty, fairness, and integrity are found in the goals and reflect those accepted values.

The Committee decided to make specific references to God in the goals statement. It was felt that omission of a goal related to God would deny rather than affirm the importance of spirituality in our society. This is also in keeping with previous goals of education in this province and reference to God in Canada's new constitution. In recognizing that this is a pluralistic society, the Committee felt there is a need to respect the religious differences of Saskatchewan residents.

Societal Change and the Future

The Curriculum and Instruction Review Committee recognized that change will be a way of life in the future. A person once trained for a specific job and retired from that same position at age 65. That is now being challenged by fast-paced technological, environmental, and economic change. People may work at several jobs during their lifetimes, and may be periodically or permanently unemployed.

Given this view of the future, several shifts in educational goals appeared. The Committee suggested movement toward a K-12 core of transferable skills which could be used in many careers. The Committee also suggested that education should be seen as growth and development rather than the transfer of knowledge from teacher to students. The need to expand the definition of basic skills became apparent, and a number of goals describe the skills that graduates of the future will need to possess.

Learning was believed by Committee members to be a continuous process that should be pursued throughout a person's life. It is no longer acceptable to expect that learning stops at the end of high school. The attitudes that support life-long learning should be developed in the early grades and reinforced at all levels. The new goals statement reflects the desire to build skills for ongoing learning.

The growing awareness of the need for healthier life styles was a further topic of discussion during goals formation. Concern regarding drug and alcohol abuse, fitness, nutrition, and mental health were expressed. The Committee recognized that patterns which constitute a healthy life style are established early and that the education system has a responsibility to continue to promote positive activities. A number of goals which address these issues were grouped into a category entitled "Positive Life Styles."

Exercising the right of dissent was an issue of debate and the source of a number of questions. Should people work to reform the system by exercising their right of dissent? How should that dissent be expressed? Committee members agreed with the need for individuals to be responsible for themselves as well as for society. They advocated recognition of the right of dissent but cautioned that it should be exercised responsibly to bring about change. The need to understand the right of dissent and its responsible use in the pursuit of justice is expressed in the goals.

After much discussion and deliberation, the Committee prepared a new statement of goals to guide education in preparing graduates for the future. In addition, the goals statement gave direction to the Curriculum and Instruction Review. It gave focus to the program policy framework, and provided the basis for other Committee decisions. The Committee believed the goals would provide direction for the improvement and renewal of education in Saskatchewan.

GOALS OF EDUCATION IN SASKATCHEWAN — 1984

The goals of education recognize the inherent worth and value of each individual. Education, then, should develop the potential of each person to the fullest extent. It should also enhance the ability of each individual to cope effectively in a changing physical, economic, and social environment.

The attainment of these goals is a shared responsibility. The school, the home, the church, and the community all play roles in the educating of a child.

The following set of goal statements describes the characteristics of an educated person.

Basic Skills

1. Reads, writes, and computes
2. Acquires information and meaning through observing, listening, reading, and experiencing
3. Processes information through intellectual and technological means
4. Applies basic principles, concepts, problem-solving strategies and processes of the sciences, arts, and humanities to understand, interpret and function in the world
5. Communicates ideas through written and spoken language, mathematical symbols, and aesthetic expression

Life-long Learning

1. Seeks and values learning experiences
2. Acts as a self-reliant learner, capable of autonomous learning
3. Bases actions and decisions on the knowledge that it is necessary to learn throughout life

Understanding and Relating to Others

1. Bases decisions and actions on the recognition that people differ in their values, behaviours, and life styles
2. Acts on the belief that each individual has value as a human being and should be respected as a worthwhile person
3. Interacts and feels comfortable with others who are different in race, religion, social level, or personal attributes.

Self-Concept Development

1. Perceives self in a positive way
2. Appreciates own abilities, potential, and limitations
3. Assesses realistically the reactions of others
4. Presents oneself with confidence and a sense of security and well-being.

Positive Life Style

1. Practises appropriate personal hygiene, consumes a nutritionally balanced diet, and engages in sufficient physical activity to maintain personal health
2. Avoids harmful use of alcohol and other drugs
3. Cultivates interests that may be the basis for personal development and leisure pursuits
4. Performs daily activities in a manner that preserves a sane and healthful community
5. Respects and seeks to enhance the environment
6. Appreciates and enjoys beauty in its many natural and constructed forms
7. Expresses self creatively.

Spiritual Development

1. Cultivates a sense of the purpose, worth, and meaning of human existence
2. Respects and values family, religion, and culture in a pluralistic society
3. Grows in the knowledge of God and develops a sense of responsibility toward others.

Career and Consumer Decisions

1. Develops an awareness of career opportunities
2. Assesses and develops interests and abilities in relation to vocational opportunities
3. Adapts to shifts in employment patterns and technology
4. Makes informed consumer decisions.

Membership in Society

1. Assumes responsibility for own decisions and actions
2. Works with others to achieve individual and group goals
3. Participates in the democratic processes of government, performs the duties of citizenship, and respects the rights and property of others
4. Acts in accordance with an ethical framework reflecting the qualities of honesty, integrity, compassion, and fairness
5. Exercises the right of dissent responsibly and in accordance with personal conscience and social justice
6. Works to create greater social justice
7. Affirms laws and authority
8. Assumes responsibility for dependent persons in a manner consistent with their needs
9. Recognizes the importance of productive activity and pursues tasks with perseverance.

Growing with Change

1. Bases actions and decisions on an understanding that change is a natural process in society
2. Acts with an appreciation that, in a changing world, flexibility and adaptability are necessary
3. Works toward immediate and long-term goals
4. Selects workable alternatives in response to changing and uncertain conditions
5. Develops confidence in making decisions that involve risk
6. Works for goals based on realistic personal performance standards.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE NEW GOALS

The statement of goals has implications for curriculum, instruction, and school environment. The category of "Career and Consumer Decisions", for example, necessitates inclusion of consumer information in the courses of study. Similarly, instruction is affected by the goals of education. The category of "Life-long Learning" requires that students act as autonomous learners; teacher-centered instruction as the only mode of instruction would prevent the attainment of that particular goal. The goal category "Understanding and Relating to Others" has implications for school environment; each student in the school must be seen as a worthwhile individual if that belief is to be transferred to students as a goal of education. Each goal statement, then, can be analyzed in terms of what it means to the day-to-day operation of the school and the classroom.

IMPLEMENTING THE NEW GOALS

A clear set of goal statements provides direction for educational planning and policy making. The educational goals of a province represent a statement of beliefs to be used when making decisions affecting the nature of schooling. Goals can also be used to establish educational priorities and to clarify the role of the school.

A statement of goals provides a frame of reference for choosing from among competing alternatives and in assessing educational innovations. Although the proposed goals statement is provincial in scope, it can be employed at all levels of the education system.

The Committee considered two options: it could recommend that the Minister accept the goals statement as written by the Committee and propose that the goals be adapted locally, or it could recommend that the Minister consult with the public on the Committee's proposed goals for education and ratify the goals based on that consultation. Because the Committee had gone through such an extensive process of preparing the goals statement, the decision was to recommend that the Minister accept the goals as presented in "Directions".

Local Goals of Education

The Committee saw the setting of clear goals as a necessary first step in the improvement of our education system. Goals can be used by a school or division to assess its effectiveness and to determine what is good and what needs to be changed.

Committee members recognized that goals cannot be imposed upon schools. However, they felt that prepared workshops should be made available to schools upon request. It was proposed that workshops be designed to provide awareness of the new provincial goals, a procedure for establishing local goals, and opportunities for developing goal-setting skills and structures for ongoing goal-setting.

As clear goals are essential to school planning, so were they essential to the Committee's own decision-making process. The goals statement became the basis for Committee consideration of all other issues.

Kindergarten to Grade 12 Program Policy

The Curriculum and Instruction Review Committee was asked to review existing program policies and to assess the degree to which they meet the needs of students. A variety of concerns related to program were expressed by the public during the Review. Questions were raised about the structure of our school system, courses of study, continuous progress, school attendance, graduation requirements, needs for the future, and policy development.

To assist the Committee in its discussions and deliberations about program policy, a sub-project was organized. The sub-project committee reviewed current policies, identified issues and problems, and outlined options and alternatives for revision in an effort to provide clear direction and guidelines for school programs. The sub-committee work formed the basis for the Advisory Committee's considerations and recommendations on program policy.

COMMITTEE CONSIDERATIONS

In addressing concerns related to program policies, the Committee chose to study current policies and identify problems in order to determine a set of principles for establishing new policy. In addition, the Committee explored a number of guidelines it felt could direct the development of a new program policy.

Current Program Policies

The current program policies for Saskatchewan schools have evolved over time as various documents have been developed. The major documents and legislation which outline program policy include *A Plan for the Reorganization of Instruction in Saskatchewan Schools* (1963), *A Statement of Division Four Program Policies* (1975), *The Education Act* (1978) and Regulations. In addition, policy is contained in memos, letters, internal Department documents, instructional resource materials, and curriculum guides.

The 1963 policy *A Plan for the Reorganization of Instruction in Saskatchewan Schools* outlined the Division System. In the Division System, the 12 years of elementary and secondary education are divided into four divisions, of three years each. This was seen as a way to implement the idea that learning should be developmental and sequential, and that students should progress at their own rates instead of passing, failing, or skipping grades.

The plan provided for a nine year compulsory program of basic education with a strong emphasis upon skill subjects and a mastery of fundamentals. At the elementary level, Divisions I and II, the basic skill subjects were to be emphasized to ensure literacy.

In Division III, grades 7 to 9, the program was planned to give students a wider orientation. Subjects such as a second language, industrial arts, and home economics were to be available. These courses were not to be electives but were to be a part of a broad core. The aim was to help students become aware of their interests and aptitudes so they could make wise selections of courses in the senior high school. An adequate guidance program was to be an integral part of the revised program.

While statements regarding the Division IV program were made in the 1963 document, the major guidelines for this level are outlined in *A Statement of Division Four Programs* (1975).

Division IV, grades 10 to 12, was designed to reduce the compulsory subject requirements and allow a greater degree of flexibility and freedom of choice from a broad range of elective courses. It eliminated the concept of tracks or streams. The former rigid program that required the completion of a total grade was replaced by a program that required students to earn 21 credits over three levels. Students were not to repeat full grades but only those courses which were failed.

Academic courses and a range of technical-vocational courses were to be available to the Division IV student. Vocational programs were designed to accommodate students interested in technical training, trade training, and business opportunities. A smorgasbord of over 300 provincial courses of study has been developed in the past 20 years and can be offered in Division IV schools.

Graduation requirements for Division IV state that the student accumulate 21 credits over three years: five credits at each of the three grade levels and six additional credits. Within those guidelines there are required courses at each level. In grade 10 students must take english, mathematics, science, and social studies. In grade 11 students must take english, and in grade 12 students must take english and an approved social studies. In addition, students are required to take one course from the mathematics-science group at either the grade 11 or grade 12 level. The remaining credit requirements are met by the completion of elective courses.

The Education Act (1978) and Regulations specify the compulsory subjects which must be taught in the elementary grades and outlines the graduation requirements for high school completion. Although it states that the final decision relating to program lies with the board of education, it provides the boundaries within which that decision must be made.

Curriculum guides represent another level of program policy. They provide detailed content outlines, as well as suggested teaching strategies, student activities, time allocations, and authorized textbooks and materials. Teachers are expected to use the guides when planning the instructional program.

Memos and letters which interpret policy are also perceived as being statements of program policy. While they are not recognized as official policy, they do provide a source of information to guide program decision-making.

The Problem

The Curriculum and Instruction Review Committee called for a new program policy because of a number of problems which became evident during the Review. It was felt that current policy needs revision in light of inequalities which exist in the school system. There was concern expressed that the current program will not prepare students for the future, and that current policy is not reflective of a clear set of educational goals.

The Committee found that another problem related to program policy was the lack of a comprehensive policy statement to address all aspects of program. The fact that current policy is contained in several documents makes it difficult for someone to understand the various aspects of the program for Saskatchewan schools.

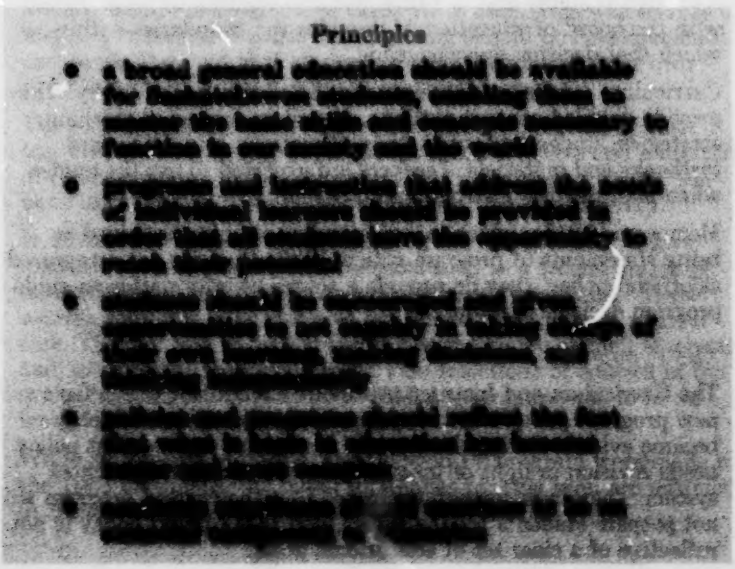
The work of the sub-committee revealed that the Division System outlined in the 1963 policy appears to exist more in name than in substance. A great number of variations exist with respect to student placement and promotion. The repetition of complete grades continues to be practiced below Division IV.

There was much debate as to whether or not the current Division IV program provides a broad general education for all. Concern was raised that meeting the needs of students through electives leaves gaps in many students' educations. A further concern was the discrepancy that exists in program offerings between large and small high schools, and between urban and rural high schools.

With these problems in mind, the Committee decided to recommend changes in current policy in order to make school programs more effective and decision-making regarding programs more efficient. The Committee felt it was necessary to provide a clear statement of direction for Saskatchewan schools by developing a single kindergarten to grade 12 program policy that articulated all aspects of the program.

Principles

The Committee agreed on a number of underlying principles to be reflected in program policy. These guided Committee decision-making during the development of its policy framework.



- [illegible]
- [illegible]

Much of the discussion on policy focused on the concept of core curriculum. Committee members were committed to the concept, but debated whether or not they should develop the idea to the point of assigning minutes to subject areas, setting new graduation requirements, or timetabling a secondary core program to be presented as an example. They concluded that it would be premature to proceed at that time. The Committee felt there is a great deal of work to do in order to move the concept into practice, and that the work should involve a large number of parents and educators in the province.

Committee members decided to prepare a framework based on some key guidelines to direct the development of a new kindergarten to grade 12 program policy. They also recommended that a process be initiated to test the various features of the framework and that extensive involvement of educators take place in the development of a new program policy.

A FRAMEWORK FOR PROGRAM POLICY

The framework proposed by the Curriculum and Instruction Review Committee describes a new structure for Saskatchewan's education system. The characteristics are presented as guidelines and provide ideas and directions but not specific details. The Committee felt that the framework should provide only the essential components of the proposed changes.

In keeping with the belief that collaboration and involvement are essential to effecting change, the Committee chose to present the options and alternatives discussed. Here, then, are the guidelines for implementation of the new program policy proposed by the Curriculum and Instruction Review Committee.

Continuous Progress

Continuous progress is a philosophy of education that advocates the individualization of instruction. It is based on the belief that learning is growth, that growth is continuous, and that students vary in their rates of growth. Students are to be treated as individuals progressing at their own rates and according to their own learning patterns. Learning activities which are appropriate to the child's developmental level are provided, and promotion to more advanced work occurs at the time when a student is ready to move on.

When the philosophy was initially adopted in Saskatchewan in 1963, changing the structure of the education system was seen as the appropriate way to individualize instruction. To implement continuous progress at that time, a different administrative structure was seen as necessary to allow students to learn at their own rates. Subsequently, the Division System was introduced.

The Curriculum and Instruction Review reaffirms and supports the concept of continuous progress as the philosophy of education for Saskatchewan schools. Meeting the needs of individual learners through this approach is still valid in 1984. The Committee did see, however, a different plan for implementing the growth of the concept of continuous progress.

The Committee discussed a number of factors related to meeting the needs of individual learners. Committee members thought that, if continuous progress is to be implemented, teachers need support. Initiatives are needed to develop inservice education for teachers on elements related to individualizing instruction. Such topics as learning styles, using learning resources, student learning activities, curriculum adaptation, grouping of students, multi-graded classrooms, classroom management, remediation, enrichment, and self-directed learning were considered important.

Kindergarten to Grade 12 Continuum

The Curriculum and Instruction Review proposed that policies, program, and curricula be developed with a kindergarten to grade 12 orientation. A comprehensive K-12 program policy was recommended so that statements related to school programs are contained in one place. This would facilitate decision-making related to program, and provide for long-range planning.

An organization of curricula in a K-12 continuum was also suggested. This organization would allow individuals to progress developmentally from one level to the next. It would outline the concepts and skills in a format that would facilitate continuous progress and would serve to clarify the current confusion related to repetition of concepts at various grades.

The continuum of learning is based upon recognized differences in learning rates. Remediation and enrichment, therefore, are essential in order that students have learning experiences appropriate to their needs and developmental levels. Failure as the total repetition of a complete year of work is not in keeping with the concept of continuous progress. Rather, it is hoped that students will progress on a developmental basis according to their individual growth rates.

While a K-12 continuum is advocated as the orientation for policy and planning, levels and grades are proposed for operational purposes. Age groupings should be identified as follows: kindergarten, elementary (grades 1 to 5), middle (grades 6 to 9), and secondary (grades 10 to 12). Learners in each of these groups have a different set of characteristics and are at unique

developmental levels. It is expected that these differences will be reflected in the focus at each level and in the program and instruction provided. Chart 1 displays an overview of the proposed developmental levels within the K-12 continuum.

While these levels of instruction are the preferred groupings of grades in the school organization, it is recognized that children mature at different rates; there is no clear demarcation between levels. The Committee suggested that grades 5 and 9 be regarded as transitional years for most students. The Committee felt that the upper year of each level be seen as the transition year to avoid pushing students too quickly into the instructional mode of the next level. It was suggested that particular attention be given to development of curricula for these transitional years.

The Committee's interpretation of levels was not intended to affect placement of students in school facilities. A grade 9 student, for example, could be housed in an elementary, a junior high, or a secondary school depending upon a school division's organization. The dividing of the continuum into levels, however, was intended to affect curriculum and instruction independent of where students are housed.

In advocating a K-12 continuum, Committee members hoped to address problems related to the overall organization of content. They felt that planning and development within a K-12 orientation would provide continuity in the educational program.

Core Curriculum

While the Curriculum and Instruction Review Committee affirmed the need to continue focusing on the traditional mathematical and language skills, it saw an urgent need to expand the definition of basic skills. Schools must emphasize the development of higher order thinking skills including the ability to anticipate and predict, to analyze information, develop hypotheses, and problem-solve.

The Committee also advocated the need for a broader vision of literacy. Literacy can no longer be considered only as the ability to read and write. Our society presents us with a number of languages or systems of symbols which can be used to interpret the world. Graduates of the future must be able to perceive the world and express themselves in a variety of ways.

The Committee felt that the school needs to address the question of segregated curriculum. Opportunities for integration of skills, concepts, and knowledge should occur across subject areas and within subject areas.

There was a strong feeling that the quality of the educational program should be consistent throughout the province. Students in rural areas, urban locations, and the North should have the same opportunity to develop a range of skills and to attain literacy in a variety of areas.

In order to address these aspirations — to expand the range of basic skills, to expand the vision of literacy, to increase quality of

Chart 1: K-12 Developmental

	Kindergarten	Elementary
Grades		1-5
Learner Traits	• Concrete learner • Learns through discovering, experiencing, observing, interacting • Dependent learner	• Concrete learner • Learns through repetition, experiencing, discovering, interacting • Dependent learner
Focus	• To orient learner to school system	• To establish skills, concepts, and learning processes for grades 1-12 developmental program
Program Needs	• Organization around themes, concepts, skills • Development of attitudes toward formal learning • Preparation for formal learning • Development of socialization skills	• Organization around basic skills, concepts, principles • Development of basic skills and processes of learning • Initial application of basic skills • Continued emphasis on social skills • Integration of learning processes with content • Initial orientation to subject areas
Instruction Needs	• Instruction is child centered • Positive, supportive learning climate • Students involved in designing and managing their own learning • Foundation for concepts built through structured play • Learner characteristics provided for through a variety of teaching strategies	• Individual and group learning experiences provided • Positive, supportive learning climate • Students involved in goal setting, planning, self management of learning • Hands-on activities provided • Learner characteristics provided for through a variety of teaching strategies

Levels

	Middle	Secondary
	6-9	10-12
	• Transition from concrete to abstract learner	• Continued transition from concrete to abstract learner • New learnings require movement from concrete to abstract
	• Learns through: interacting, exploring, questioning, comparing	• Learns through goal-setting, investigating, problem-solving
	• Transition to independent learner	• Independent learner
	• To assist learner with physical, social, emotional, and intellectual transformations	• To prepare learner for personal, social, vocational, and academic needs after grade 12
	• Organization around basic skills, concepts, principles, and subject areas • Expansion and refinement of basic skills • Continued application of basic skills • Continued emphasis on social skills • Continued integration of learning processes with content • Continued orientation to subject areas • Introduction to course options • Extensive guidance and counselling	• Organization around applying skills, concepts, knowledge to problems, issues, events • Continued development of basic and higher level skills • Application of knowledge, skills, and processes • Continued emphasis on social skills • Consolidation of learning processes and content • Opportunities for in-depth study in subject areas • Provision of a range of course options • Extensive guidance and counselling
	• Individual and group learning experiences provided • Climate becoming more open • Students increasingly involved in setting goals, designing plans, managing activities, evaluating success, reviewing the process • Social/personal development provided for • Learner characteristics provided for through a variety of teaching strategies	• Individual needs and interests accommodated • Climate of openness, built on mutual trust to provide challenges, and freedom to explore interests • Student given many opportunities to plan, manage, and evaluate own learning experience. • Social/personal development provided for • Learner characteristics provided for through a variety of teaching strategies

educational programs throughout the province, and to integrate skills, concepts, and common learnings — the Curriculum and Instruction Review Committee recommended that a kindergarten to grade 12 core curriculum be developed. While the Committee did not work out the specific details of the proposed core curriculum, it did articulate a number of components that would characterize the core.

The Committee envisioned core curriculum as having two major components. The first and most significant is a kindergarten to grade 12 continuum of general skills, concepts, and common learnings that are essential for functioning as an educated person in a changing society. The second major component of the core curriculum is a kindergarten to grade 12 continuum of skills, concepts, and knowledge in specific subject areas.

The skills developed in the core should be those skills necessary to function in the will and those skills that would enable individuals to learn throughout life. While the Curriculum and Instruction Review Committee did not identify a comprehensive list of skills, they did suggest that skills in the following areas were key: problem solving, life-long learning, decision-making, critical thinking, consumer education, oral and written communication, research, adaptability, technologies, and working in a group.

These core skills, concepts, and common learnings should be set out in a developmental sequence. Many of them should be introduced in kindergarten and expanded and refined as the student progressed through the grades. Some should be initiated in a later grade and be developed through the years and beyond grade 12, while others should be emphasized early and only receive concentrated attention to the end of grade 10. The Committee felt that scope and sequence, the time of initiation, and the level of refinement for skills and concepts are considerations developers must address.

It was envisioned by the Committee that the focus of the core with respect to the general skills and concepts would change from the elementary level to the secondary level. Development of basic skills and concepts was seen as fundamental at the elementary and middle levels. Time spent on the application of skills and concepts should increase as the student moved through the levels.

The second major component of the proposed core curriculum concerns the disciplines or subject areas the Committee deemed important in response to the need for the expanded vision of literacy. Six areas were identified as providing ways of perceiving, communicating, and expressing ideas: language arts, mathematics, aesthetic education, physical education, science, and social studies. Each was seen as representing a language which opens new doors in helping to understand the world.

The Committee stressed the importance of the concept of continuum when looking at a core program. The continuum of

learning is essential in order for students to progress through the program at their own rates, and in order for the program to be developed with a logical sequence of skills, concepts, and knowledge. The Committee saw the amount of time spent on the core decreasing as the student moved through the continuum, with the secondary student spending less time on core and more on electives.

The Committee saw a number of possibilities for implementing a core curriculum in a school: the core could be taught as six separate subjects, the core could be taught as a fully integrated curriculum, or there could be a balance between separate and integrated subjects. The Committee supported integration of core subjects, while recognizing that all schools might not choose to use the same approach to delivering the core.

The concept of a core program in Saskatchewan is not new. There are presently a number of subjects which have been designated compulsory and are considered to comprise a core program. There is currently a balance between elective and compulsory subjects at the secondary level, and the Committee saw a similar balance occuring between elective courses and its proposed core program. However, two aspects of the proposed core are markedly different from what is now found in the curriculum: the Committee proposed that the core be developed on a continuum with the same six subject areas present from kindergarten to grade 12, and the Committee advocated the need for a skills and concepts orientation in addition to the subject area orientation.

Electives

Elective courses comprise all courses of study that are offered in the school program in addition to the core curriculum. Electives can be provincially designed or locally developed courses of study.

The term elective carries two shades of meaning. A board of education may elect to offer courses of study (such as religion in a separate school) which would be considered compulsory for students in particular grades in a specific school division. Elective also refers to a course in which a student chooses to enroll.

Committee members saw a limited amount of time allocated for elective courses of study at the elementary level. They saw the percentage of time spent on electives gradually increasing at the middle and secondary levels.

Health was not included in the proposed K-12 continuum, but the Committee thought it should be a compulsory course at the elementary and middle levels. In addition, the Committee recommended that at least one year of computer science be compulsory at the middle level. No compulsory courses outside the core were identified at the secondary level.

Electives were seen as an important part of the educational program. The Committee felt that a range of electives should continue to be available to supplement the core curriculum.

Particularly at the secondary level, electives were seen as providing students with the opportunity to choose or select a portion of their instructional program with the help of counselling and guidance to meet their individual needs.

Alternative Programs

Not all children have the same needs. Occasionally, the situation arises where a group of children have trouble adjusting to the regular program or structure of the school system. Some of these situations in Saskatchewan have a geographical basis; there are sparsely populated areas or isolated communities which need special modes of delivery or instruction. Culture and lifestyle are two other factors which affect the organization of schooling. For example, in Northern Saskatchewan children often have to leave school to participate in such family endeavours as fishing, hunting, and trapping. It is difficult for those children to re-enter school after being away for periods of time. Linguistic background and religious persuasions also influence educational decision-making. In addition, children with exceptionalities require adjustments and special arrangements in school organization or the delivery of educational services.

An excellent education system has the flexibility to comfortably deal with individuals and groups which have unique needs. The Curriculum and Instruction Review made repeated references to meeting the individual needs of Saskatchewan children. Although the proposed policy framework is intended to enable boards of education to better meet the needs of their students, the Committee recognized that alternatives must exist within the education system.

In considering alternatives, the Committee discussed modified programs, a modular approach to curriculum development, a variety of delivery mechanisms, different organizational models, and adjustments to the school year and the school day. The Committee felt that a variety of options need to be available to accommodate the needs of Saskatchewan children and the diverse situations in our province.

In order to facilitate alternatives, it is essential that a policy be set out by the Department of Education to provide guidelines for local school divisions in their programming. The Committee recommended that Saskatchewan Education work co-operatively with school divisions to encourage the individualization of instruction and the personalization of programs.

Committee members also recognized that there are many alternative and innovative programs operating in Saskatchewan schools at this time. They felt that successful innovations should be identified and given high profile. They advocated the encouragement and support of experimental and demonstration schools. It is recommended that a network be established to diffuse effective programs and instructional strategies across the province.

By encouraging experimentation in programming and alternatives in delivery mechanisms, Saskatchewan Education will enable more boards of education to overcome barriers which come between a child and his or her education.

Curriculum Development Processes

Curriculum development processes have been discussed on a number of recent occasions. Three major events — the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation Curriculum Symposium, the Minister's Mini-Conference on Curriculum Development for the '80's, and resolutions of the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation and the Saskatchewan School Trustees Association — have addressed the need for an assessment of curriculum development in Saskatchewan. Specifically, the following concerns have been repeatedly voiced:

- lack of a process for continuous assessment and revision of curricula
- new curricula not always successfully implemented
- lack of continuity in content from grade to grade
- insufficient resources allocated to curriculum development in the province
- length of time taken for the development of curricula.

In response to these concerns, the Curriculum and Instruction Review Committee prepared a proposal for a new curriculum development model and presented guidelines which outline a more effective planning process.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Curriculum development for Saskatchewan schools has gone through a number of phases over the years. Two or three decades ago, curriculum for Saskatchewan schools was contained in four "programs of studies" publications, one for grades 1-8 and three for grades 9-12. There was an introduction dealing with the aims, objectives, and role of the school. The following points summarize some of the characteristics of curriculum guides of this period:

- a two or three page course outline was provided
- a single textbook was authorized and, in effect, constituted the course of study
- "A" and "B" courses were provided in certain subjects at the elementary level. (In odd years "A" course would be used in split grades, and in even years "B" course would be used)
- the emphasis was on activities rather than on intended learning outcomes.

In the mid 1960's, the Division System was introduced. The scope and philosophy of the system were described in a policy entitled *A Plan For The Reorganization of Instruction in Saskatchewan Schools*. It included an outline of the revised curriculum plan for schools and statements on the role of the school, objectives of education, the revised pattern of school organization, the organization of curriculum guides, and guidance.

This marked a period of intensive curriculum review. All courses of study had to be adapted to fit the divisional organization and the emphasis on units of work. Steering committees became very active in each subject at each division level.

Loose-leaf sets of courses of study were developed, one each for Divisions I, II, and III. The characteristics of the curriculum guides at this time included the following:

- emphasis shifted from activities to "understandings to be developed"
- suggestions for teachers were emphasized — "suggested organization of content" and "suggested activities"
- more extensive lists of resource materials were supplied
- more detailed learning objectives were provided.

In the late '60's and '70's, a consolidation took place. There appeared to be a need to provide teachers with more details. There emerged a fairly standard approach in which courses of study were organized by concepts, instructional objectives, suggested activities, and suggested resources.

This was a period in which curriculum committees worked largely independent of the Department to modify and expand the basic outlines prepared in the '60's. As a result, some unity was lost. While a few replacements for the loose-leaf courses of study were produced, the new courses of study soon became self-contained documents. Characteristics of courses of study during this phase included the following:

- size and format of courses of study varied tremendously
- curriculum committees tended to impose a specialist's approach to teaching a subject
- uneven quality was evident in the presentation of material
- the "unit" approach to curriculum organization disappeared
- many textbooks were authorized and a large amount of resource material was identified
- bibliographies to support curriculum guides were prepared.

The establishment of comprehensive schools during this period meant that a large number of courses of study in technical and vocational subjects had to be developed.

At the same time, the questions of local program development and provision for professional decision-making related to instruction were being raised. Suggestions were made that only a general framework should be supplied by the Department.

A number of changes have been made in curriculum development in the past few years. A policy statement on curriculum committees was prepared recently and a number of models of curriculum development have been tried. While the concept of the curriculum committee as an advisory board has been retained, a variety of methods for development work have been tested. Materials developed recently have a number of characteristics in common:

- they tend to be more comprehensive than earlier material
- a package of publications and resources, rather than a single document, is supplied
- there is an attempt to advocate a particular approach to instruction
- the material tends to be much more complex and sophisticated.

Implementation of new courses of study became a concern in the '70s. Regional workshops were held where members of the curriculum committee served as consultants. Those who attended regional workshops accepted consultative roles in the inservice orientation to new courses in their respective school divisions.

Later, subject area consultants were hired to assist school divisions in program implementation. Workshops and summer school courses conducted by university personnel and supported by Department of Education bursaries for teachers were also utilized.

The most recent approach has been the use of Regional Co-ordinators of Curriculum who are charged with linking the Department and the field on most aspects related to program implementation. They collect information on courses, arrange for the pilot testing of materials and components of new programs, provide awareness on new courses, and train teacher workshop leaders to conduct inservice education sessions.

At one time, each school unit had a Department-employed Superintendent of Education. A primary responsibility of the superintendent was to ensure the quality of education in the school unit, and this involved the evaluation of programs.

Gradually, there was a shift to locally employed Directors of Education and a shift of responsibility for program evaluation and maintenance to the local level. A variety of methods have been used to channel information from the local level to the provincial, and lack of systematic procedure has resulted in gaps.

Curriculum evaluation procedures have again come to the attention of the Department of Education. A draft proposal for program evaluation has been developed, outlining an internal Department

process that is currently being tested. The process entails the review of information from yearly Director reports, curriculum committees, the Program Policy Committee, the STF, the SSTA, school divisions, teachers, the universities, and interest groups related to curriculum. Decisions about curriculum are made based on the information collected.

COMMITTEE CONSIDERATIONS

Although curriculum development and curriculum implementation have gone through a number of phases, less emphasis has been placed on program evaluation or program maintenance. Systematic procedures to ensure evaluation and maintenance of curricula have not been developed to the same degree.

The Committee felt that all four components are necessary to keep Saskatchewan school programs current and relevant. It was hoped that more efficient planning procedures would alleviate many of the problems related to "add-on" curricula and content concerns raised during the Review.

In order to deal with the concerns raised during the Review, the Committee organized a sub-project to study curriculum development processes. The mandate of the sub-project was to identify processes related to program development and to explore and clarify current thinking about roles and responsibilities for program development at the provincial and local levels.

In addition to reviewing the literature and other provincial development processes, the sub-committee held consultations with various groups of educators to gather ideas and suggestions for a new curriculum development model. In January of 1983, a curriculum conference was held to discuss and examine curriculum development processes.

Committee deliberations resulted in the preparation of guidelines for the drafting of a new curriculum development model, the preparation of guidelines for a curriculum development manual, suggestions regarding roles and responsibilities, and the preparation of guidelines for curriculum content.

A CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT MODEL

The Committee proposed a new curriculum development model. This model outlines a process that involves four functions: program evaluation, program design, program implementation, and program maintenance. The four are interdependent and cyclical; one stage provides the impetus for the next. The process is one of constant evaluation, needs assessment, and subsequent change to keep curriculum current and appropriate.

Increased involvement of educators at all levels is perhaps the biggest change outlined in this framework. There is a call for input, reaction, and feedback from teachers, principals, directors, and superintendents at all stages of program development.

The curriculum development model that is proposed and presented in Chart 2 outlines specific steps for the development of provincial curricula.

Program Evaluation

Program evaluation involves the collection of accurate information for decision-making about the design or improvement of courses of study. Evaluation, formal or informal, should be the starting point for all curriculum development. Efficient program evaluation has the following characteristics:

- follows a systematic procedure for gathering information on instructional programs and courses of study
- uses the information collected in making decisions about program development
- is on-going
- ensures involvement of all those affected.

Program Design

Program design describes the process of developing the course of study that sets out intended student learnings in a particular area. Effective program design has the following characteristics:

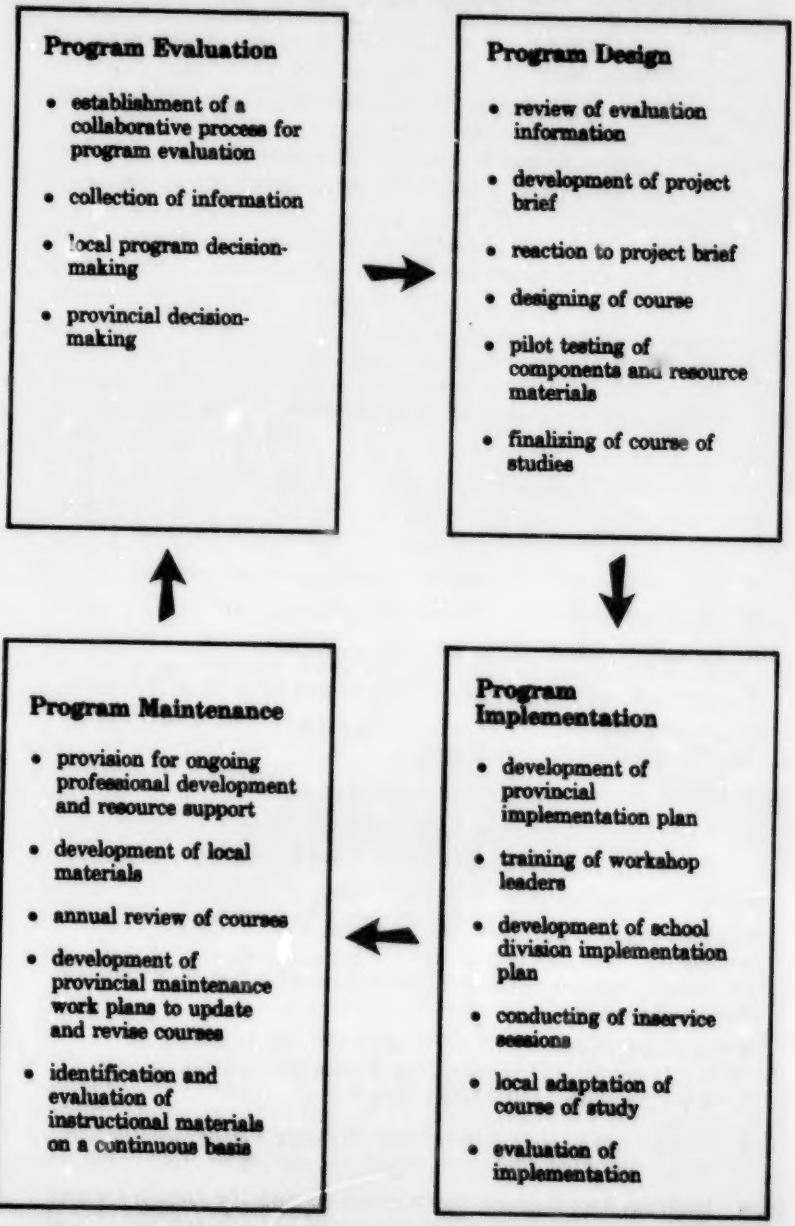
- uses a systematic process for designing courses of study
- considers a variety of approaches to design
- develops courses within a K-12 continuum
- provides suggestions for integration among courses of study
- ensures opportunities for involvement of all those affected by courses of study
- enables local adaptation of courses of study
- facilitates and provides supervision for the development of local courses of study when a local need is defined.

Program Implementation

Program implementation is the component of the development process that provides procedures for installing courses of study into the school program. Successful implementation has the following characteristics:

- provides awareness of the change and opportunities for involvement of directors, superintendents, principals, and teachers before and during design
- follows a plan that is developed with appropriate groups and which describes timelines, resources, and personnel needed
- provides opportunities for teachers to gain the knowledge and skills necessary for implementation of the new courses of study
- includes plans for follow-up and support after the initial orientation

Chart 2: Curriculum Development Model


Program Evaluation
• establishment of a collaborative process for program evaluation
• collection of information
• local program decision-making
• provincial decision-making
Program Design
• review of evaluation information
• development of project brief
• reaction to project brief
• designing of course
• pilot testing of components and resource materials
• finalizing of course of studies
Program Implementation
• development of provincial implementation plan
• training of workshop leaders
• development of school division implementation plan
• conducting of inservice sessions
• local adaptation of course of study
• evaluation of implementation
Program Maintenance
• provision for ongoing professional development and resource support
• development of local materials
• annual review of courses
• development of provincial maintenance work plans to update and revise courses
• identification and evaluation of instructional materials on a continuous basis

- provides for local adaptation of courses of study.

Program Maintenance

Program maintenance refers to the procedures necessary to support, monitor, and revitalize courses of study and related materials. Effective program maintenance has the following characteristics:

- updates and disseminates existing and revised courses of study and instructional materials
- provides continuing professional development and support for teachers
- provides opportunities for the involvement of teachers and other agencies in the maintenance of programs
- collects and analyzes data for program evaluation purposes on an ongoing basis.

The model provides for a continuous systematic review and assessment of courses of study. Use of the model would ensure that curriculum guides remain current and appropriate. With the model in place, the chance of a course of study not being revised for a long period of time would be remote.

THE CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT MANUAL

The Curriculum and Instruction Review Committee suggested that a manual outlining procedures for curriculum development at the provincial and local levels be prepared and distributed. The Committee envisioned that this manual would be developed in consultation with teachers, professors, principals, directors, and Department personnel. A number of areas were suggested for inclusion in the manual:

- description of the phases of the curriculum development process
- terminology and format suggestions
- theoretical information on learning styles, brain research, cognitive development, self-concept development, and moral development
- descriptions of various committees
- research and literature on instruction and student evaluation strategies
- Department procedures and appropriate policies
- procedures for systematically gathering information on programs and courses of study
- alternative models and procedures for curriculum design
- criteria for instructional materials evaluation
- implementation strategies

- provincial and local responsibilities
- guidelines for local curriculum development.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Committee suggested roles and responsibilities for the Department of Education, the Program Policy Committee, School Divisions, the educational organizations, and the universities. The Committee reccommended that teachers, principals, directors and superintendents be involved at all stages of curriculum development.

Department of Education

The Committee identified the need for the Department of Education to develop a comprehensive plan for program evaluation. This plan should outline procedures for school divisions to use when gathering information on courses of study. It should also outline a process for the Department to use for collecting, processing, recording, and reviewing data on courses of study. There is a need for the Department to establish K-12 subject area committees, and to provide professional development and support services to help school divisions with program evaluation.

There are a number of activities related to program design to be carried out by the Department of Education. These include the development of project briefs for review by a variety of educators, the development of a variety of approaches to program design, and the extensive field testing of guides and instructional materials during design. The Committee also called for the Department to prepare the proposed curriculum development manual.

The development of plans for the implementation of new and revised courses of study will be the responsibility of the Department. Related activities include the training of workshop leaders and field staff, and the preparation of a professional development package.

Once programs are implemented, the Department will be responsible for the collection of information to assess degrees of implementation, plan revisions to courses of study, and evaluate instructional materials on a continuous basis. Collection of information during program maintenance is related to program evaluation and ensures that courses of study are continually reviewed and updated.

Program Policy Committee

The Program Policy Committee (PPC) was seen as having an expanded role in the curriculum development process. It was proposed that the PPC take an active role in advising the Department during all phases of the process. The PPC would be required to review evaluation data and make recommendations for changes to courses of study. Members should be involved in reviewing and approving Department of Education project briefs

which articulate work plans for specific subject areas. In addition, they would oversee the maintenance of courses by regularly reviewing and making recommendations for formal program evaluation, revision, and design, or for the updating of support materials.

School Divisions

The role of school divisions, as proposed by the Curriculum and Instruction Review Committee, has been expanded. Program evaluation has been designated as primarily a school division responsibility. The model charges that each school division develop a plan for the comprehensive review of courses of study in its jurisdictions. This information will be used by the school divisions to make decisions about the instructional program, provision of materials, professional development activities, and long range plans. It will also provide the basis for recommendations made to the Department of Education on courses of study.

Teachers, principals, directors, and superintendents will be involved in three activities during the design phase. The Committee suggested that project briefs be forwarded to school divisions with a request for reaction and suggestions. It was also suggested that teachers pilot components of the curriculum to validate courses of study before they reach final draft form. Evaluation of textbooks and instructional materials will also be an activity requiring field input.

During implementation, the school division will be responsible for developing a plan for its jurisdiction. Committee guidelines for the plan suggest that the following items be addressed: arrangements for an initial workshop, provision for instructional materials, ongoing professional development, on-site coaching, and local materials development and course adaptation. Funding for materials and the provision of human resources to carry on the activities are designated as school division responsibilities.

During the evaluation phase, school divisions will collect information on the effectiveness of the implementation and the course of study. Annual reviews of instructional programs and courses of study are part of the program maintenance function.

STF, SSTA, LEADS, Universities

Adoption of the new model has implications for educational organizations including the STF, SSTA, LEADS, and the universities. Input from these organizations will be requested during the phases of program development. During program evaluation, assessments of various courses of study will be asked for. During design, personnel may become actively involved in developing and testing courses or resource materials. Assistance may also be requested for such activities as training workshop leaders.

CONTENT

The Curriculum and Instruction Review Committee did not do a content analysis of all courses of study available in Saskatchewan. They chose instead to concentrate on the preparation of a new curriculum development model. Committee members were confident that the new curriculum development model would provide a process to address the many concerns expressed about curriculum content. However, they did choose to address directly some aspects of content which seemed to demand particular attention.

The Committee made a number of recommendations they felt should guide curriculum developers:

- Indian/Native content should be included in courses of study
- the issues of discrimination, prejudice, and race relations should be included in the curriculum at or before the grade 8 level
- curriculum materials should not present racial or sex-role stereotypes
- Saskatchewan and Canadian content should be given special attention
- 50 to 70 per cent of a course of study should be designated as essential curriculum (essential curriculum being that which includes process and content objectives which must be taught)
- 30 to 50 per cent of a course of study should be designated as optional curriculum selected or developed by the teacher and school (optional curriculum being that which contains non-compulsory alternatives as a means of building personal and social relevance into curricula).

Evaluation

Evaluation was a topic the Committee discussed on a number of occasions and in a variety of contexts. Four aspects of evaluation were addressed at different times during the Review:

- student evaluation
- teacher accreditation and evaluation
- program evaluation procedures
- system effectiveness indicators.

While the extent of discussion in each area varied, the Committee continually found that decisions regarding one area could not be made in isolation from the others. All are interrelated and are part of the larger issue of effectiveness and accountability.

The Committee felt that making numerous recommendations on isolated components of evaluation would fragment initiatives to measure effectiveness and consequently work against improvement efforts. Committee members also wished to provide directions for improvement rather than to prescribe solutions. In this spirit, the

Committee recommended the review of all evaluation procedures with the anticipated outcome that mechanisms or processes allowing for continuous checks on effectiveness would be developed.

In order to address this recommendation and to accommodate the various points of view, the Committee proposed that a reference committee be established to gather information and develop a plan for action. The Committee set out some guidelines for further deliberations.

Current Projects

The Committee urged that any review take into account the evaluation projects presently underway in the province. For example, the Department of Education has recently completed a teacher handbook on student evaluation practices and is conducting inservice education sessions with teachers. The Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation is currently leading a review of teacher accreditation in the province. A number of school divisions have initiated school effectiveness programs and are in the process of assessing the educational system in their respective jurisdictions. In addition, the Department is testing some procedures for collecting information for program evaluation purposes. These projects and others need to be considered in a total assessment.

Student Evaluation

The Committee made a number statements on student evaluation:

- teachers should use a range of evaluation strategies to aid them in making diagnostic decisions about student progress and student needs
- the purpose for evaluation and the use to be made of results need to be considered when choosing evaluation procedures
- no changes in grade 12 examination procedures should be made at present, but the question of grade 12 exams should be considered within the context of an evaluation review
- school-to-school differences in examination results at the secondary level should be analyzed
- procedures should be established for increased communication between representatives of the K-12 school system and advanced education institutions regarding entrance requirements and expectations for students.

It is hoped that these statements will be used as guidelines by the reference committee.

Teacher Accreditation and Evaluation

The Committee felt a review is needed to determine whether or not accreditation policies are continuing to meet the objectives for which they were established. In addition, it was suggested that the sensitive issue of teacher evaluation be addressed during the

review. The present lack of clarity around the definition and function of teacher evaluation has produced a climate of uncertainty among educators. It is hoped that a review would help educators recognize the benefits to be gained from collecting data for the purpose of improving performance.

Program Evaluation

Program evaluation was the subject of much discussion. The Committee felt program evaluation must be ongoing at the classroom, the school, the division, and the provincial levels to ensure that our educational offerings are relevant and appropriate. Lack of clear and systematic procedures at all levels hampers the development process and results in outdated and inappropriate courses being taught. While the Committee made some suggestions on program evaluation in its proposed curriculum development model, it felt that the issue must be considered as part of a total review of evaluation of education in the province.

System Effectiveness

The Curriculum and Instruction Review was intended to assess the effectiveness of the education system in Saskatchewan. It was the first major review of the system in a number of years. During Committee discussions and deliberations, the concept of a self-renewing system surfaced time and time again. It was felt that, if the system were continually being monitored and assessed, major studies would not be necessary. It was the hope of the Committee that, as a result of the Curriculum and Instruction Review, the education system would continue to grow and improve and that procedures or mechanisms could be put in place for continuous evaluation. The Committee envisioned that all levels of the system would establish planning procedures to provide for the continuous assessment of effectiveness.

CHAPTER TWO: Programs

Part of the mandate of Saskatchewan Education is to provide support to schools through a variety of programs. It is recognized that curriculum development is a major program that falls within Department responsibility. There are, however, a number of other programs and services through which the Department supports school operations.

In the past, the Department has tended to assist schools and teachers through grants and services. Support has included such things as grants for innovative programs, bursaries for teacher training, the provision of subject area consultants and curriculum co-ordinators, and the preparation of inservice packages related to curriculum, and funding for school divisions to jointly hire professionals to provide special services.

The Curriculum and Instruction Review Committee saw the need for such services to continue. However, the Committee also saw the need for the expansion of the Department's role. In addition to providing financial assistance, resources, and information, the Department can assist schools and teachers by providing programs to facilitate ongoing school improvement.

The Committee wanted to see the Department take initiative in a number of areas related to school improvement. They named six areas in particular: learning resource centres, support services, school environment, inservice education, instruction, and leadership.

That is not to say that the Department of Education is solely responsible for implementing improvement projects. Many of the Committee's recommendations require collaborative action at all stages from planning through implementation. However, the Committee did state that the Department should initiate action and become involved in each of the six areas. What follows is an examination of each of the topics, with special attention given to the role of the Department in implementing the Committee's recommendations.

Learning Resource Centre Services

The idea of a Learning Resource Centre (LRC) as a repository of books that serves to supplement education is no longer acceptable. Rather, the LRC is considered an integral part of the educational program. The LRC can provide the following:

- a range and variety of resources chosen to meet the demands of the curriculum and the individual needs of students and staff

- a range of programs and services that ensure the effective use of those resources and effective implementation of curricula.

Learning Resource Centres should provide services that are integrated into the total instructional program of the school. Materials are chosen to meet the requirements of the curricula. The staff of a LRC works in partnership with the teaching staff, sharing responsibility for the designing of those learning activities that meet the stated goals and objectives of the school curriculum. Effective Learning Resource Centres provide learning environments and opportunities that accommodate individual differences and enable each student to learn in his or her own way through reading, talking, listening, and viewing.

With the reaffirmation of the philosophy of continuous progress, the establishment of new goals of education which outline an expanded definition of literacy, and the call for a developmental orientation to curriculum, support for the Learning Resource Centre is more vital than ever. Ready access to a wide range of resources and provision of a variety of learning activities are imperative.

BACKGROUND

A study of Learning Resource Centres in the province was commissioned as a sub-project of the Curriculum and Instruction Review Committee. The purpose of the study was to investigate the present state of LRC services in the province in an attempt to determine the extent to which these LRC's are able to provide adequate curricular support to students and teachers.

The study was primarily descriptive in nature. Telephone interviews with the principal and the person assigned the responsibility of the LRC in a randomly selected group of schools were conducted. Questions were asked about the following: staff, budget, physical facilities, access, collection and collection organization, services and programs, and use. In addition, questions concerning priorities and expectations were asked of the principal, and opinions on various aspects of the LRC program were solicited from both the principal and the person responsible for the LRC.

The results of the study clearly told the sub-project committee that Learning Resource Centre services in Saskatchewan are inconsistent from school to school, and are generally inadequate.

Levels of Service

The quality of service provided by a LRC is dependent on the personnel provided, the resources and equipment available, the adequacy of the physical facilities, management policies, and degree of support from all levels. These, in turn, are dependent on available financial resources.

Standards for these basic components have been developed in Canada and are useful in planning for LRC services. Learning

Resource Centre services can be classified as inadequate, minimum, good, or excellent. Chart 3 outlines the differences between the various levels of service that are provided by Learning Resource Centres in schools. As a school plans for development across this continuum, the role of the LRC and the role of the school librarian become increasingly integrated into the learning process.

The sub-project study indicated that the level of service in Saskatchewan is below the minimum standard. Problems are evident in a number of areas. No provincial policy exists to direct development, and there is no provincial LRC consultant to provide guidance and support. In fact, no consistent policy exists at any level and most LRC's are operating without clearly defined policies for service.

Lack of trained staff is the most crucial problem. Consequently, the selection of resources is haphazard and inadequate, and programs are minimal. Untrained staff cataloguing and organizing the resources makes it unlikely that resources are organized for the most effective use, and without adequate clerical or cataloging services, much staff time is taken up with technical duties.

Many other problems are evident. Restricted access and lack of adequate physical facilities limit use in a number of schools. Many of the LRCs' collections are still print-oriented, providing little opportunity for students to experience learning through audio or visual media, or to gain skills in viewing and listening. Inservice opportunities are minimal, as are consultant services and information on selection and programming. Few schools have access to services at a divisional or regional level.

With the majority of the province's LRC's operating at the inadequate or minimum level, students and teachers are not provided with opportunities to make the most effective use of resources in their teaching and learning. Independent study and individualized instruction cannot take place.

THE ACTION PLAN

The sub-project committee outlined a comprehensive plan to upgrade the level of Learning Resource Centre services in the province. The Curricululm and Instruction Review Committee endorsed the plan and recommended that it guide the action taken to improve Learning Resource Centres in schools.

The plan begins with the development of a provincial policy, moves to the provision of support services at the regional and divisional levels, and then outlines proposed actions at the school level. Development at all these levels is necessary for effective LRC growth.

Policy Development

The development of a provincial policy was proposed as the first step to LRC improvement. The policy should include roles and

Chart 3: LRC Levels

COMPONENTS	INADEQUATE	MINIMUM
Personnel	• none • student volunteers	• full-time qualified teacher-librarian • no support staff • student/adult volunteers
Facilities	• poorly designed & unattractive space • inadequate shelving, furniture, equipment, & student activity space	• adequately designed & attractive space • appropriate shelving, furniture, equipment, student space (1-2 classes)
Collection	• limited collection; minimal organization • selection by teachers	• basic print/non-print resources; organized & catalogued • cooperative selection by librarian & teachers
Management	• no policy • informal supervision & operation	• policy • effective administration of selection and access
Divisional, Regional and Provincial Support	• no divisional or regional support; minimal provincial support	• consultant services, additional resources, and professional collection available
Program	• none	• focus on basic curriculum support • library & research skills instruction • basic loan service

# of Service

GOOD	EXCELLENT
→	→
• part-time support staff • trained volunteers	• support staff based on needs →
→	→
→	→
	→
• adequate storage and working space	• all technological aids
• developing collection related to needs • cooperative selection using preview & evaluation procedures; high staff involvement	• rich collection with inter-library loan services →
• policy • effective administration of time-tabling, schedules, budgets, selection, and access	→
	→
	• continuous evaluation and expansion of services
→	→
• policy at all levels	→
	• provincial LRC network
• focus on integration with teaching program • skills instruction co-ordinated with classroom activities • planned programs • inservice programs & production capabilities available to teachers	• focus on curriculum planning & development • librarian/teachers team teach • skills development program • integral part of teaching/learning process • access to provincial resources

functions of LRC's and personnel, and provide minimum standard guidelines for services. It was felt that unless the Department formally recognizes the role LRC's can play in the achievement of educational objectives, it is unlikely that comprehensive planning for effective LRC development will be initiated at the local level. It was further suggested that policy development take place in consultation with an LRC Advisory Committee.

Communication of this policy and its implications to the educational community is the next step in upgrading LRC services. The sub-project committee suggested that a series of workshops be made available to educators.

Following the development and distribution of the Department policy should be the development of regional, divisional, and local policy, along with long-range planning to implement that policy.

Provincial, Regional, and Divisional Support Services

A co-ordinated system of support services at the provincial, regional, and divisional levels was seen as essential because of the lack of trained staff in local LRC's, the limited expectation of teaching staffs, and the expressed need for inservice programs and informational services. LRC's in the province are still in the formative stage, and the need for an active consultative service is of prime importance.

Staff must be available at the provincial level to integrate LRC services with all other Department services, to provide leadership in planning and co-ordination of services, and to monitor, assess, and evaluate progress. A provincial librarian, two field consultants, and support staff were suggested as staff for a provincial team.

It was suggested that trained, full-time LRC consultants be appointed to each of the regions, along with appropriate clerical support staff. Appropriate space and facilities would also be required in each of the regional offices. Regional consultants would carry out an assessment of the LRC's in their region, determine needs and appropriate services for that region, and prepare a plan for the development and implementation of these services. They would also carry out a periodic evaluation of regional support services.

As part of the support services plan, each division should also have a trained, full-time LRC consultant and appropriate support staff to provide consultative and support services to the LRC's in the division.

Learning Resource Centre Development at the Local Level

Local development of LRC's can occur in conjunction with development at divisional, regional, and provincial levels. Each school, for example, could assess its LRC and develop a plan for improvement under the direction of the division's consultant. In addition, each school can plan inservice around developing awareness of LRC policy and effective use of LRC services.

Although supports must be put into place at all levels, change in the current status of LRC's will not occur without local participation.

Timeline for Implementation

Upgrading Learning Resource Centres in the province will take time. The sub-project committee recommended that a four-year implementation plan be considered. It was felt that the first steps must begin at the provincial level. Following provincial policy development, the provincial and regional level support systems need to be put in place. Divisional and local development should proceed once mechanisms are established at the provincial and regional levels. Continuous support in future years is also necessary to maintain LRC services and to upgrade them once minimal standards are achieved province-wide.

Implications for Teacher Education

The upgrading of Learning Resource Centre services has implications for teacher education. To begin with, increased awareness of the role of the LRC must be built into programs. LRC's can be effective only if teachers are aware of the services and how to use them. In addition, training programs for LRC staff must be developed so that qualified teacher-librarians are available to provide services at all levels.

THE DEPARTMENT'S ROLE

The implications for the Department of Education on this project are extensive. The Committee felt it was essential that the Department take a position of leadership in assigning high priority to LRC services by developing policy and providing the resources necessary for implementation of the policy.

This project would require the Department to provide a number of resources:

- adequate staff for a provincial team of LRC developers
- an inservice program which would communicate the Department's LRC policy to school personnel in the province
- staff and the necessary resources at the regional offices
- assistance which would enable divisions to provide divisional LRC staff and support services.

There is no way to avoid the fact that providing students in Saskatchewan with the kind of LRC service that will effectively meet educational objectives and curricular demands will be a costly endeavour. The alternative is to continue with facilities that are inadequately staffed and poorly equipped, to rely on resource collections that are inappropriately chosen and poorly maintained, and to do without those services and programs that assure access and effective use.

Consistently, reports and studies have documented the need for LRC's and their services to be placed at the core of educational programs. Failure to respond to this need will leave students without the skills and resources to meet the demands of an increasingly complex world.

Support Services

There are four categories of services which support school activities: social services, community resources, parental support, and professional services.

Social services refers to services such as guidance and psychological services, school social work services, and services for physically handicapped children. These services are provided by various agencies within and outside the school.

Community resources support the school program by providing additional enrichment through cultural, civic, and recreational activities.

Parental support ranges from parents volunteering to act as resource personnel, teacher aides, and chaperones, to parents being involved in decision-making around school issues.

Professional support services refers to those services provided to schools by boards of education, the Department of Education, and other organizations. Professional support services are aimed at improving policies and procedures, providing resources and inservice education, and providing opportunity for curriculum development and professional growth.

BACKGROUND

A sub-project on school support services was established by the Curriculum and Instruction Review Committee. The sub-project committee addressed the following objectives:

- to define and conceptualize support services
- to describe the present level of support service activity in the province
- to establish a set of indicators or principles to guide the provision of support services
- to examine alternative models for implementing support services
- to develop a framework for delivering support services
- to propose an action plan for improving support services for schools in Saskatchewan.

Interviews were conducted with a large number of people: directors; teachers; government officials from Education, Social Services, and Health; members of the business community; and

members of professional organizations in Saskatchewan and across Canada. In addition, a search of the literature on support services was conducted. The information collected provided the base for Committee decision-making.

The Problem

In Saskatchewan, the school's role in the planning and providing of support services has never been defined. Teachers are dissatisfied with the present situation where there is confusion about what responsibility belongs to whom. Parents are frustrated when they are not involved at the decision-making level.

All four types of support services are in need of organization and co-ordination. However, the area that poses the biggest problem for teachers is that of social support services. When children come to school with needs which impede learning, teachers have little recourse but to attend to those needs. Without support services, the task is prohibitive.

The Committee felt there is a need for one agency or person to work with parents and providers of services to see that all needs of a child are met and to ensure that services are not overlapping or working at cross-purposes. The Committee observed that, unless these services are co-ordinated at the local level and unless people are involved in decision-making, the services will probably not be of benefit to those who need them.

In summary, the Curriculum and Instruction Review identified some areas of need. The Committee was concerned with reducing time pressures on teachers, identifying existing support services, publicizing existing support services, eliminating rural/urban differences in availability of support services, enabling service workers to cross organizational boundaries in the delivery of support services, and creating support services needed by local communities.

THE ACTION PLAN

The Curriculum and Instruction Review Committee highlighted some aspects it felt were particularly important in the development of a plan of action. Identification of the school's role, the organization and co-ordination of existing services, the creation and development of support services needed by local communities, and the organization of support services at the local level all need to be considered in outlining future action related to support services for schools.

Roles and Responsibilities

Providing services to children is a shared responsibility. With regard to all types of support services, the Committee saw the need to affirm the importance of involving parents, teachers, professionals, and the community in decision-making. While it was recognized that parents have the primary responsibility in

providing for the social needs of their children, the school often finds itself in the role of co-ordinator and provider of many social services. At present, the extent to which the school ought to assume responsibility is unclear. The need to clarify roles and responsibilities related to support services was seen as necessary in the development of a co-ordinated approach for the future. Specifically, the school's role in the provision of social services needs to be defined.

Development and Organization of Services

There is clearly a need for the organization and co-ordination of all support services that are available to schools. The area most in need of co-ordination is social support services. The Committee recommended the development of an organizational structure which would facilitate local choice and meet local needs. The Committee also recommended that decision-making take place at the local level with input from all levels of government.

A large number of people are involved in assessing a child's needs. Local level co-ordination would ensure that those needs are met and that the plan of action allows for participation of all those affected. The Committee felt this co-ordination should take place at the school, but recognized that local jurisdictions would have to decide what type of co-ordination would best meet their needs.

The Committee, in supporting school level co-ordination, advocated the creation of a position for a support services co-ordinator to act as a liaison between the school and the resources. While the Committee felt the school was the appropriate place for this co-ordination, it did not advocate that the task be assumed by teaching staff. Co-ordination of support services is time-consuming and would, in most cases, require additional personnel.

The Committee thought that co-ordination at the district and provincial levels was needed to provide a support structure for local co-ordinators. District or area level co-ordination would involve creation of new services, organization of resources, establishment of guidelines and procedures, and maintenance of a dissemination system of resources and services for local co-ordinators. Co-ordination of resources, services, and agencies at this level would enable local co-ordinators to spend their time serving the needs of children rather than assessing and developing resources and services.

Co-ordination at the provincial level would involve development of fiscal policy, the co-ordination of roles and responsibilties, and the co-operation of various departments and agencies to eliminate overlaps and gaps. Initial identification of programs, services, and resources would also take place at this level.

The Committee recommended that action related to the co-ordination of support services be initiated at the provincial level. Formal dialogue between the Departments of Health, Social Services, and Education was seen as the first step in developing a

co-ordinated support system at the local level. It was hoped that the outcome of this dialogue would include the following:

- definition of the school's role in providing support services
- organization of a co-ordinated system for providing support services
- interdepartmental, intradepartmental, and interagency co-ordination of resources and services
- planning for the provision of school level co-ordinators
- clarification of expectations, roles, leadership responsibilities, and support parameters
- the elimination of overlaps, gaps, and the waste of energy, funds, and time evident in current practices.

THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION'S ROLE

The Committee called for the Department of Education to assume a leadership role in initiating discussion with other departments to address the organization of a co-ordinated system for providing support services. The Committee anticipated that the Department might also assume the task of provincial co-ordination of support services once the mechanisms have been established.

School Environment

School environment refers to the spirit that pervades the school and has been described as the personality of the school. It reflects the personal and social relationships in a school, and plays an important role in determining effectiveness, productivity, and satisfaction of both staff and students. All schools possess an environment and this environment is unique to each organization.

A healthy school environment is characterized by the presence of such things as trust, respect, satisfaction, creativity, warmth, caring, support, high morale, and a high degree of student and teacher involvement. On the other hand, if a school climate is not healthy, a number of factors are apparent: low innovativeness, job dissatisfaction, alientation, lack of creativity, complacency, conformity, and frustration.

Recent research shows that the school has an important impact on a child's development and growth. It has a profound affect on levels of learning achieved by students and influences the entire educational experience for both students and staff.

BACKGROUND

A sub-project on school environment was commissioned to provide information for the Curriculum and Instruction Review Committee. The sub-committee conducted a review of the literature and collected a Saskatchewan information base.

The sub-committee surveyed a limited number of principals, teachers, and students throughout Saskatchewan on the topic of school environment. These people were asked what school environment is, what factors influence school environment, what the positive and negative features of present school environments are, and what changes they would like to see.

Components of School Environment

Many factors combine to provide a working atmosphere that is both satisfying and productive. Particular features of school organization and functioning influence success and efficiency.

A common set of goals that provide direction for the staff and students is important in establishing the environment. These must be shared and supported by the parents and community. They guide decision-making on priorities and resource allocation, and are a public statement of what the school is striving to achieve.

The key factor in establishing the school's environment is the administrative leadership of the principal. A leadership style that provides for participation, input, and involvement is most successful. The principal makes sure tasks are carried out appropriately, listens to staff requests, and supports school activities. An effective leader finds out what staff and students need and works at providing the necessary resources and support.

Clear roles and responsibilities are defined in a healthy organization. People know what they are to do and who is responsible for the different aspects of school management. Procedures are established for decision-making, problem-solving, conflict resolution, and general management of the school.

The quality of personal interactions are valued in a school with an effective environment. Such things as respect, trust, caring and support, intimacy, objectivity, and cohesiveness also contribute to the feeling or spirit of the school. Information is shared among teachers and other groups affiliated with the school. Morale and feelings of self-worth are high, as are expectations. Student and staff accomplishments are recognized.

An attitude or spirit of inquiry held by all members of the school community contributes to the continual improvement of the school. Individuals and groups are constantly seeking alternatives, and are willing to try new solutions to problems. Inservice education sessions are related to school goals and improvement projects.

Effective teaching behaviors and practices comprise another component of school environment. Attitudes and expectations about instructional planning, the variety of learning opportunities, order and discipline, and monitoring systems influence the environment of the entire school.

An orderly place in which to work and learn is also very important. The physical facilities must be adequate and clean, and everyone must have regard for maintaining the school property. Basic rules

of conduct that are understood and agreed to by administrators, teachers, and students contribute to an orderly school.

The Problem

Results from public meetings and the Curriculum and Instruction Review questionnaire indicate that parents believe school environment is an area warranting attention. There appears to be widespread dissatisfaction that the school system, particularly as it relates to high school, has become too impersonal. There is a fear that children are being deprived of a warm, loving environment at an early age.

In addition, the school environment sub-committee concluded from its study that, while many teachers and administrators recognize that environment plays a role in school effectiveness, there is a range of opinion about its importance. The diversity of responses among principals and teachers indicates a lack of understanding of the factors that influence school environment and possible strategies for improvement. Educators stated that, while they are interested in improvement, they have limited time and resources to initiate changes.

At present the concept of school environment is not examined in any major way in teacher education programs. No specific classes are available to study school environment and it is a topic considered in only a few courses now being offered.

THE ACTION PLAN

The Curriculum and Instruction Review Committee saw school environment as an important component of the entire improvement process. The Committee recognized that real changes in education begin at the school. In order for changes to occur, there must be an environment that is supportive and promotes openess to change.

The Committee recommended that a program be initiated to heighten awareness of the importance of school environment, and to assist schools in improving their environments. The Committee saw the school environment program providing an inservice package and technical assistance to school staffs.

The inservice package should be adaptable to local needs. The Committee recommended that it contain the following:

- information on the characteristics of healthy environments and the effects of school environment on learning
- guidelines and strategies for the assessment of school environment components
- practices and procedures for enhancing working and learning conditions
- a planning process to help parents, students, teachers, and administrators to improve environments in their schools.

It was not intented that this package would be a step-by-step program to make all schools in Saskatchewan the same. Rather, the Committee called for a set of materials which would help staffs and students determine their own unique school environments and work toward improvement. They saw this inservice package as a skills development initiative rather than an information package.

The Committee felt that training and resources would be necessary to implement changes. Therefore, they recommended that technical assistance in the form of consultants be made available to help schools in their change efforts. Consultants would facilitate assessment procedures, assist staffs in planning for improvements, link school staffs with resources, and provide support during the improvement process.

THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION'S ROLE

Committee members looked to the Department of Education for leadership in the initiation of a program on school environment. While they did not necessarily advocate that the Department conduct the program, they felt that direction and support should come from the provincial level.

Specifically, the Committee recommended that the Department provide support and resources for the following actions:

- the development of an inservice package on school environment
- the development of a plan to impact schools throughout the province
- the training of resource personnel to provide technical assistance
- the provision of consultant services to assist schools in their improvement efforts.

The Committee urged that the Department of Education give school environment immediate consideration in its initiatives for improvement.

Instruction

Instruction refers to all those actions taken to encourage and help students learn and reach curriculum objectives. It involves creating a climate for growth, planning for learning, delivery of content, and evaluation.

BACKGROUND

A sub-project on continuous progress, and background papers on learning, change, and future requirements provided the Committee with information on instruction. Presentations on various aspects of instruction at different times throughout the Review were another source of information. Comments and suggestions gathered

at public meetings, from briefs, and from the questionnaires guided discussions and deliberations.

The Problem

A number of concerns were expressed about the delivery of the curriculum to students. Individualizing instruction was addressed repeatedly. There were numerous comments about students with special needs and about the adjustment of programs for gifted and slow-learning children. The question "What happened to continuous progress?" was frequently asked. Teachers commented that continuous progress is good in theory but, in practice, is not working.

Concerns about instructional strategies surfaced throughout the review. There is an apparent need for teachers to use a variety of instructional strategies in order to accommodate the various learning styles of students. Instructional strategies were often addressed in reference to continuous progress and the need for a variety of learning opportunities.

Student evaluation was another concern which received attention in discussions on instruction. Evaluating for the purpose of failing and passing students was questioned. It was suggested that more emphasis be placed on diagnosing student needs in order to plan effective instruction.

The role of the teacher was also debated. Is the teacher disseminator of knowledge, facilitator of learning, or co-ordinator of social services? New knowledge about effective teaching, expectations of the school, and future needs have created confusion about the role of teachers.

THE ACTION PLAN

Teachers must be given adequate support to enable them to enhance their capabilities in meeting the needs of individual learners and in meeting the challenges of teaching for the future. The Committee recommended that a collaborative project be initiated to focus on effective instruction. Committee members felt that the improvement of instruction would require the involvement of all the educational organizations. They saw the Department of Education initiating discussion on effective instruction with the Saskatchewan School Trustees Association, the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation, the University of Regina, and the University of Saskatchewan.

Guidelines for a project on effective instruction were discussed during the Review. The Committee saw the need for a number of steps in the provision of support for teachers. Following are proposed components of a project on instruction:

- the review of aspects of effective instruction
- the identification of existing programs that address effective instruction

- the investigation of new approaches to inservice education on effective instruction
- the design of a long-term, comprehensive plan to improve instruction
- the development of inservice education projects that will provide skill development for educators
- the need for teachers to plan their own professional development.

Committee members recognized that a number of projects may be needed to address the many elements of effective instruction. However, they felt strongly that efforts should be conducted within the context of a total plan that provides for all aspects of this major part of the learning experience.

The Committee outlined a number of topics they saw being addressed as part of a project on effective instruction. It was felt that three areas in particular should be considered: the role of the teacher, individualization of instruction, and instructional strategies.

The Role of the Teacher

At one time, the teacher was seen only as a disseminator of knowledge. It is now perhaps more correct to describe the teacher as a decision-maker. A range of decisions confront teachers every day. A variety of learning theories and learning styles have been identified, content is constantly increasing, technology is rapidly expanding, and a variety of instructional strategies are available. Teachers need to consider a whole host of factors in making decisions about the matching of content, materials, and instructional strategies with learner needs.

The Committee accepted two basic premises related to learning: that learners must assume more responsibility for their own learning, and that learning is a continuous and life-long process. These beliefs have implications regarding the role of the teacher. Teachers need to structure the environment and facilitate learning to provide opportunities for students to engage in problem-solving and decision-making about what and how they learn. Teachers themselves need to become life-long learners and participate in planning for continuing profesional development and improvement.

Individualizing Instruction

Committee members saw individualization of instruction as a means of meeting the needs of each individual learner. In discussing this concept, they did not envision that each student would be pursuing an individualized program. Rather, they saw teachers adapting either the environment, the program, or the instructional approach to accommodate the needs of the individual learner. They felt this could be accomplished in a number of ways. While some students may have a program designed specifically for

their needs, other students may be grouped for some subjects with learners who have similar needs. In other cases, individualization of instruction might involve extensive use of the learning resource center, or adjusting program expectations for exceptional children. Individualization could also mean planning a variety of learning experiences so that there is provision made for all learning styles.

In order to individualize instruction, teachers need support through inservice education and resources. Inservice education on the following topics was seen as necessary if the concept of continuous progress is to be implemented: learning styles, student assessment and evaluation, classroom climate and management, use of learning resources, organization of student learning activities, curriculum adaptation, remediation and enrichment, multi-grade strategies, grouping of students, and learning theories.

Instructional Strategies

Instructional strategies refers to the approaches teachers use to present course material and to engage students in learning. While Committee members discussed many aspects of instruction, they gave particular attention to instructional strategies and stated that a range of strategies should be employed in the classroom. They stressed the need for strategies which would help students develop concepts and skills, engage in higher-level thinking, and learn to work with others effectively in achieving group goals.

The Committee identified the importance of appropriate selection and use of strategies. Students at the various developmental levels require different types of strategies to facilitate their learning.

THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION'S ROLE

Committee members recommended that the Department of Education initiate discussion with other educational leaders on effective instruction and the development of projects for improvement. They asked that leadership be provided at the provincial level and saw the Department assuming an active role related to instruction. They encourage that participation extend to all projects designed to improve instruction.

Inservice Education

Inservice education refers to activities that enhance the professional growth and development of educators. Workshops, courses, university classes, conventions, institutes, professional reading, classroom visitations, intern supervision, seminars, short courses, and committee work all provide opportunities for educators to continue learning. The purpose of inservice education is twofold: to foster individual growth, and to improve teaching.

In the early stages of public education, teacher training was minimal. Prospective teachers attended normal school for a short time and schools emphasized only the teaching of basic skills. The

teacher was essentially a dispenser of information, and technology was simple. Little training was needed to sustain a professional educator throughout his or her career.

Expectations of schools have increased dramatically. Information is continually changing and technology is advancing rapidly. Educators are required to employ much more complex strategies and approaches, and are expected to keep pace with changing content and technology. Inservice education is the vehicle for offering information and training to educators so they can respond to the changing needs of students.

Learning has become a life-long pursuit. Initial teacher education training is no longer sufficient to sustain professional educators throughout their careers. It is essential that educators adopt the attitude that learning goes beyond initial training and continues throughout life.

BACKGROUND

In January of 1983 the Curriculum and Instruction Review Committee established a sub-project on inservice education. An interagency consultation was organized to provide a province-wide look at inservice education. Representatives from the Department of Education; the League of Educational Administrators, Directors, and Superintendents; the Saskatchewan School Trustees Association; the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation; the University of Regina; and the University of Saskatchewan met on two occasions to address a number of questions related to inservice education in the province.

At the meetings of the inservice consultation group, the change process was reviewed, effective inservice education criteria were shared, the roles of organizations were discussed, gaps in inservice education in the province were identified, and the need for co-ordination was established. In addition, an historical and futures perspective on inservice education was reviewed. Discussion was held on school-based strategies for professional development, and decisions related to co-ordination of inservice education activities in the province were made.

A renewed vision of inservice education resulted from the meetings, and a steering committee was formed to test co-ordination of inservice education activities and projects in the province.

The Problem

A number of concerns about inservice education were identified during the Curriculum and Instruction Review. Inservice education seems to be an event rather than an essential part of a planned change. "One-shot" sessions are often unrelated to the real needs of teachers, the school, or the division, and do not seem to be part of a larger plan of improvement. The lack of teacher involvment in planning, the ineffective delivery of inservice activites, and

inadequate time and support were voiced as problems. Parents, board members, and teachers expressed concerns about the value of inservice education.

The lack of a planned approach to inservice education in the delivery of activities appeared to be a concern. Because inservice education proceeds in an unorganized fashion, time and money are inefficiently used. All the educational organizations, including the universities, the Department of Education, the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation, and the Saskatchewan School Trustees Association, are involved in providing inservice education to educators. Lack of articulation and communication have resulted in groups working on similar projects while some areas of need are never addressed.

A number of gaps in the delivery of inservice education were identified during the consultation. The following needs were articulated:

- a policy-making structure in the province to provide direction and guidelines for effective practice
- clear purposes and goals of inservice education
- systematic planning processes for needs assessment, inservice education delivery, and evaluation of inservice education activities
- people trained to design and deliver effective inservice education based on adult learning theory, change research, and staff and organizational development studies
- school-based inservice strategies
- an understanding of the principles of effective inservice education, and the range of approaches and opportunities that are available
- support and training for administrators to enable them to fulfill their roles in the planning and delivery of inservice education
- a monitoring and evaluation system for inservice education.

THE ACTION PLAN

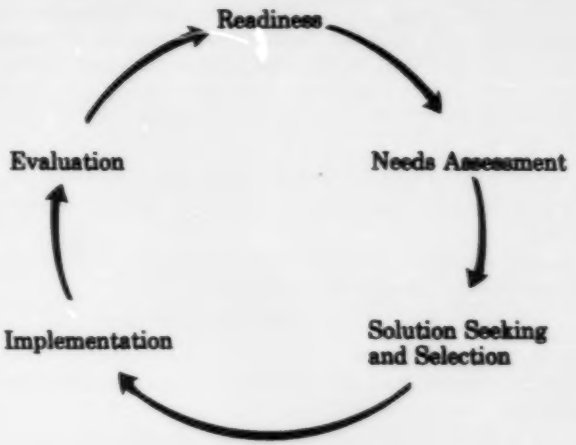
Part of the response to the present challenge of education is a renewed vision of inservice education. The Curriculum and Instruction Review Committee hoped that the vision would provide a goal, and that efforts to co-ordinate and organize would provide the first steps toward ensuring more effective inservice education.

A Renewed Vision of Inservice Education

Effective inservice education is not an event by itself but is part of a planned improvement project. The renewed vision called for inservice education to be conducted within an established process by skilled leaders. These leaders apply adult learning principles and demonstrate effective inservice education techniques.

The Committee recommended that inservice education be placed within the context of the Change Process which explains five steps to follow in implementing change (Chart 4).

Chart 4: A Process for Change



- **Readiness** — implementers of change need to ensure that a number of attitudes and characteristics are present among those who are to be involved. An inquiring attitude, a commitment to continuous evaluation, and a knowledge of problem-solving skills are necessary characteristics for those involved in change efforts.
- **Needs Assessment** — collection of information to define needs or problems is a necessary step. Problem definition leads to goal setting.
- **Solution Seeking and Selection** — once goals are set, solutions can be considered. Strategies such as brainstorming can be used to generate ideas. Possible solutions should be checked against a list of criteria.
- **Implementation** — a plan for implementation is essential. Successful implementation involves awareness, knowledge, and training. Follow-up coaching is required to help people apply newly learned skills and knowledge.
- **Evaluation** — both the steps followed to implement the change and the degree of change itself must be assessed. Evaluation often leads to new solutions or further needs assessment and plans for more improvements.

Effective inservice education is closely tied to the Change Process. Inservice education activities are related to long-term plans and goals, and are based on a needs assessment to ensure that needs and delivery match. Evaluation serves to assess goal achievement, and adjustments are subsequently made.

As part of its renewed vision the Committee saw all inservice sessions being conducted by skilled leaders. Effective leaders are knowledgeable in both the content of the change and adult learning theory. They acknowledge participants' experiential knowledge and encourage involvement in decision-making. They provide for individual differences and employ a variety of strategies in their delivery. Sessions are practical and opportunities for planning and practice in skill development are provided.

Committee members acknowledged the school as the unit of change and strongly supported the concept of school-based inservice education. They encouraged school staffs to learn about effective inservice education, to initiate school planning procedures and improvement projects, and to conduct school-based inservice education activities. They suggested that boards and organizations support and encourage improvement efforts at the school level.

The Curriculum and Instruction Review Committee encouraged educators at all levels — the individual, the school, the division, and the organization — to enter into this planning process based upon what is known about successful change.

Co-ordination of Inservice Education Activities

As a result of the Inservice Consultation, a decision was made to form a steering committee to test the co-ordination of inservice education activities for educators. The steering committee consists of two representatives from each of those organizations which develop, deliver, and support inservice education programs in Saskatchewan: the Department of Education, LEADS, the Saskatchewan School Trustees Association, the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation, the University of Regina, and the University of Saskatchewan.

The Interagency Professional Development Committee (IPDC) has the mandate to test co-ordination for one year. The concept of co-ordination will be assessed at that time and decisions about continuation will be made.

The IPDC set two goals for this first year: to more effectively match inservice needs with resources, and to increase awareness of effective inservice education strategies and practices. To achieve these goals, two major projects have been initiated.

In order to match inservice needs and resources, the operation of a computerized data file on inservice resources and publication of an inservice bulletin are planned. A sub-committee is currently

working on this project and hopes to be ready to provide services to educators in the winter of 1985.

An inservice education awareness project is also in the development stages. A review of the literature on the principles of effective inservice education is being undertaken to provide Saskatchewan educators with a synthesis of the knowledge available on adults as learners and on those factors that influence successful inservice education. Following the release and distribution of this paper, an awareness package on effective inservice education will be prepared. It is anticipated that this will be available for educators in early 1985.

In addition to these two major projects, the IPDC is providing a forum for the organizations to share information on the various inservice activities planned by specific groups. It is envisioned that this avenue for sharing will result in less duplication of efforts, the identification of needs not being addressed, and the setting of goals for collaboration on major projects.

The Curriculum and Instruction Review Committee endorsed the goals and projects of this newly formed organization. The Committee felt that both the inservice education awareness package and the inservice education clearing house represent two necessary steps toward more effective inservice education practices in the province.

Committee members urged all organizations to participate in the efforts of the IPDC and to encourage effective inservice education practices within their respective organizations. They hoped that all educators will use the services provided by the committee and will in turn contribute information and resources.

THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION'S ROLE

The Department of Education is expected to participate in the efforts of the Interagency Professional Development Committee. It is hoped that Department work plans and inservice projects will be referenced with the new organization. Support for co-ordination of projects is another expectation.

While the Committee saw the Department continuing to assume responsibility for inservice education around new courses of study, it anticipated that the Department would also be more active in initiating and participating in inservice education activities in other areas. The Committee recommended that the Department initiate collaborative inservice education projects on goals of education, school environment, instruction, school planning procedures, and leadership.

The Committee stressed the importance of the Department's role in modeling effective inservice education principles and in developing long-term plans based on the Change Process.

Leadership

Leadership was referred to often throughout the Curriculum and Instruction Review Committee's discussions. In a number of instances, reference to leadership was a call for the acceptance of responsibility to initiate action, and to provide direction and support. During other discussions, leadership was used to refer to the skills and responsibilities of those in decision-making positions.

BACKGROUND

While the Curriculum and Instruction Review Committee did not establish a specific sub-project or commission a background paper on leadership, recommendations from other sub-projects and discussions on a range of topics continued to indicate that it was one of the most important issues of the Review. Calls for leadership and concerns related to leadership were voiced by the public in the briefs, on the questionnaires, and at the public meetings. Information gathered from a variety of sources provided the base for the Committee's deliberations and decision-making.

The Problem

Problems that exist in the education system can be linked, at least in part, with inadequate leadership. The wide range of roles and responsibilities assigned to educational leaders has created confusion. There is no clear designation as to what level of administration is responsible for various educational decisions. In addition, the ability of administrators to reflect the aspirations of teachers and students is a question of leadership. Perhaps the biggest problems found by the Committee on this issue were the lack of recognition of the importance of leadership, and the lack of knowledge and abilities surrounding leadership skills.

Improved leadership was identified as a need at all levels of the system and was associated with almost all areas of activity. Approaches to decision-making were questioned, with the Committee detecting concern that collaborative methods are too seldom employed in setting direction, and establishing policies and procedures. Teachers, trustees, and parents expressed the desire for more involvement in decision-making.

Concern was voiced about a lack of direction coming from the provincial level. The need for provincial co-ordination was expressed with respect to learning resource center services, support services, and inservice education. Adequate resources and co-ordination were seen as necessary to support schools in their work. Such co-ordination is dependent upon clear and strong leadership on the part of the Department of Education and the provincial organizations which have leadership responsibilities.

The need for leaders to give more attention to the instructional program and to parental involvement were identified as issues at the school level. As the school is the level at which actual change

in education takes place, there is a need for leaders to possess skills which will facilitate that change.

Importance of Leadership

Leaders play a particularly crucial role when it comes to implementing change. The Committee recognized that the growth of the system of education is dependent upon the strength and skill of its leaders. Committee members felt that the impact of the entire Curriculum and Instruction Review would be dependent upon the quality of leadership in the province.

Within the school, leaders must be able to focus the energies of staff, students, and parents on school improvement. Leadership outside the school must focus on those activities and projects which will support schools in providing effective learning environments. Efforts at the provinical level must be directed toward enabling schools to make decisions at the local level to meet local needs.

Effective Leadership

There is no single definition for educational leadership, nor is there one profile or style of successful leadership. It is more helpful to think of leadership as a set of functions, skills, and attitudes. Command of a body of knowledge is also important to effective leadership.

Effective leaders facilitate change by initiating projects, and supporting and encouraging people. Leadership involves assessing needs and providing the resources necessary to get things done. An effective leader has the ability to accomplish the following:

- set goals and establish priorities
- identify problems and establish procedures for problem-solving
- create and maintain an environment that is conducive to working and learning
- establish clear procedures and channels of communication
- organize in order to make full use of human and material resources
- develop assessment, evaluation, and supervision systems
- give recognition to staff for their accomplishments
- recognize the need for change when it becomes evident, and effectively involve the educational community in planning to meet new needs
- co-ordinate effective staff development programs.

Success in carrying out these functions depends upon the leader's command of a number of skills. It is essential that effective leaders possess skills in the following areas: communication, organization, planning, problem-solving, decision-making, conflict resolution, and human relations.

Attitudes and beliefs play an important role in leader effectiveness. A leader must be open to personal growth and change if he or she is to engage staff in improvement and renewal. A commitment to continuous learning helps establish a spirit of change in an organization. A willingness to take risks and try new ideas is also important. Collaborative processes which provide for the involvement of those affected by decisions have proven to be successful.

Today's educational leaders must be increasingly knowledgeable of a wide variety of topics including curriculum, change processes, learning styles, instructional strategies, school organization and climate, group processes, decision-making, and inservice education.

THE ACTION PLAN

The Curriculum and Instruction Review Committee recommended that leadership be given high priority and that attention be focused on strengthening and improving leadership skills. Committee members saw a need for a clear description of leadership roles and functions, and a clear statement of local and central responsibilities for education in the province. In addition, they recommended that a comprehensive and systematic training program be provided at all levels of the system to provide leaders with the skills required.

While the Committee did not develop a specific plan of action to address leadership improvement, some guidelines for consideration were discussed. Committee members recommended that collaboration be used in approaching the task of strengthening educational leadership. They suggested that representatives from the Department of Education, LEADS, the SSTA, the STF, the University of Regina, and the University of Saskatchewan be involved in the development of an action plan for improving educational leadership.

The Committee discussed a number of components that need to be considered in developing a leadership program in this province:

- the plan must be comprehensive and long-term, and provide both formal and informal means of support for leaders
- the skills, knowledge, and attitudes that are characteristic of successful educational leaders need to be identified and should form the research and information base for the program
- existing graduate courses in educational administration, the principal's short course, administrator group activities, and school division inservice activities need to be reviewed
- emphasis must be placed on the development of skills and processes needed for people to work together effectively
- approaches to developing leadership skills could include administrative internships, networking, on-site training and coaching, certification, a yearly retreat for administrators, and action research projects.

THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION'S ROLE

Committee members looked to the Department of Education to initiate discussion with educational organizations on leadership roles and training. They also advocated the active participation of the Department in any project that is developed and implemented to improve and strengthen educational leadership.

In addition, the Committee called for the Department of Education to take a more active role in providing leadership for boards of education and educators in the province. The need for clear direction was mentioned on a number of occasions. Four specific areas were identified in which the Committee felt the Department must provide leadership: provincial goals of education, policy development, curriculum development, and evaluation procedures.

The Committee also saw the Department assuming a leadership position through the provision of programs and technical assistance. The Department should provide school divisions with access to information and skill development training. Committee members saw the need for action at the provincial level related to the improvement of Learning Resource Centre services, the co-ordination of support services, and the co-ordination of inservice education activities. The Committee also asked that the Department initiate collaborative action on the recommendations addressing the issues of instruction and school environment.

A Look To The Future

Throughout the Curriculum and Instruction Review, the Committee looked to the future and to its vision of an ideal system of education. The Department of Education was very much a part of that vision and its programs and policies were directly addressed. Just as Committee members saw change and improvement in schools occurring systematically over time, so they saw changes within the Department occurring as part of a long-term change project. The Committee saw the Department as an educational leader, guiding educational growth and enabling school divisions to offer programs of the highest quality.

Perhaps what stands out the strongest in the Committee's vision is a picture of the Department as an effective leader. All innovations are carried out within the context of the change process. All steps are adhered to, and all those to be affected by the change are involved. The Department keeps up-to-date on educational research and new knowledge, and applies that knowledge to its proposed initiatives. It is essential that the Department, as an effective leader, provide a good example for all those undertaking change projects.

In the Committee's vision the Department operates as one member of a collaborative team. Communication lines remain open; all branches of the Department, and all organizations and schools are aware of what others are doing. The Department takes care to encourage such communication and willingly absorbs information gathered by other members of the educational community.

The Department works hard to eliminate any antagonism that exists within the system. It recognizes that good working relations among parents, educators, trustees, and the educational organizations in the province are essential.

The Department acknowledges the school as the focus of change. It does not attempt to impose changes upon school divisions, and instead involves schools in any decision-making that originates outside of the school. It strives to support change efforts that originate at the local level, and provides the encouragement and resources needed to support schools in their change efforts.

Changes in the roles and responsibilities of the Department of Education cannot be considered in isolation from other educational changes in the province. Educational improvement is, above all, a group effort. A collaborative spirit and effective leadership will go far in seeing the recommendations of the Curriculum and Instruction Review implemented in Saskatchewan schools.

POOR

QUALITY

ORIGINAL